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The New REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

VOL. LXXXI NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1934 NUMBER 1044

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The Week

THE Japanese government has now reiterated and amplified the terms of its concrete proposal about navies—for the speech in Philadelphia last week of Ambassador Saito was undoubtedly an official utterance. If Great Britain and the United States insist on maintaining the 5-5-3 ratio, the Washington Treaty will be canceled and an unlimited naval-building race will begin. If, however, the other powers are willing to give Japan equality, the Japanese are prepared to reduce their total naval strength by 50 percent and abolish altogether the type of vessel used in offensive warfare, such as the big battleship. The Japanese, so Ambassador Saito argues, object to the implied "moral superiority" on the part of Great Britain and the United States, which was the excuse for 5-5-3 ratio. His country does not believe that the facts of history support the contention that the other powers live up to their agreements and Japan does not.

FROM the beginning of the present negotiations in London, Great Britain has shown an anxious desire to effect some sort of compromise between the Japanese and American positions; it is the United States that has been unyielding. Mr. Roosevelt and his advisers are prepared to see the treaties of naval limitation repudiated. They will then announce a tremendous naval-building program—so large that Japan, in her precarious economic position, cannot possibly match it. They believe that before the treaties actually expire, at the beginning of 1937, they can force Japan to modify her present stand, to accept a continuance of the 5-5-3, to restore the Open Door on the Asiatic mainland and possibly to open it still wider by definite trade concessions. The New Republic has repeatedly pointed out how dangerous is such an international poker game. Our own economic position is none too good, and if we had to build the ships on the President's paper program, we would put a terrific strain on American taxpayers. Meanwhile the tension between America and Japan would be so grave that any incident might lead to extremely serious consequences. Under these circumstances, we do not see how President Roosevelt can justify to the American people a refusal to consider the Japanese proposal. The danger of war is not increased, but greatly diminished, by equality with Japan, provided offensive weapons are also abolished. As for our trade in the Orient, the world now knows that war is not a means to accelerate business.

WASHINGTON gossip for the last week or so has been providing complete details of the "great reconciliation" between President Roosevelt and the big industrialists. According to these stories, a truce has been patched up for six months. During this time, the President promises not to undertake any startling new experiments. He will do what he can, temporarily, in the direction of international monetary stabilization (this is supposed to account for the removal of foreign-exchange restrictions). He will not authorize large additional federal expenditures (this is supposed to account for the insistence that unemployment-insurance funds should come solely from employers and workers). He will give all possible government aid to private business (this is supposed to account for the R. F. C.'s reëxamination of rejected applications for loans). In such a [illegible]

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have promised to create a substantial improvement within six months. Supposedly, if they fail to do this, the President is free to resume his policy of experimentation and large spending at the end of six months' time. Assuming these reports to be approximately correct, they leave us cold for the following reasons: (1) Business had the same sort of coöperation from Mr. Hoover for more than three years, during which the situation got steadily worse; (2) It is well known that the President made a substantially similar agreement about the first of last April, and that the depression began to deepen almost at once; (3) The governmental policies favored by business would on the whole tend to restrict the purchasing power of the general population, which everyone knows is the first essential in the restoration of prosperity.

IF SUCH an agreement between Mr. Roosevelt and the business men were to exist, Mr. Harry L. Hopkins' latest order would fit into it marvelously well. Mr. Hopkins has just abolished the minimum wage of 30 cents an hour for workers on relief projects throughout the country. Complaint was made that this sum was more than the going rate of wages for common labor in certain areas, and that local enterprise could not compete with the government under such conditions. Persons on relief projects usually work thirty hours a week, at most, which would mean a wage of $9—not a staggeringly large sum on which to maintain an American standard of living. If private employers worked their men forty hours a week, which is now the officially espoused ideal of the Roosevelt administration, their workers would receive $12—which is the general code minimum for the North, and only $1 more than the code minimum for the South. We can well imagine with what a heavy heart Mr. Hopkins must have issued an order that means open confession that millions of Americans can only obtain private employment at rates far below any decent minimum.

LAST week's bombshell exploded by Leon Archimbaud, French "reporter general" for the military budget, was no surprise to close observers of European affairs. M. Archimbaud said that France and Russia now have an understanding by which the Red Army would come to the aid of France in case of attack. That such an agreement existed in one form or another has been the common gossip of European capitals for months, and the assumption has been general that it played an important part in Russia's entry into the League of Nations. Speculation now concerns itself with whether M. Archimbaud's indiscretion was genuine, or a calculated bit of French diplomacy, perhaps produced by recent reports of a growing rapprochement between Germany and Russia. "Placing the Red Army at the disposal of the French" must be only a theoretical matter at best until Warsaw permits the transportation of Russian troops across Polish territory, or unless Poland herself becomes an ally of Germany. Doubtless the aid of aircraft, however, has not been overlooked. Poland's refusal to join the Eastern Locarno pact precludes her coöperation with France and Russia in the event of a conflict with Germany, even if the Poles did not have a special agreement with the Hitler government.

SOLELY in response to a great public anxiety, Thomas N. McCarter, president of the Public Service Corporation of New Jersey and of the Edison Electric Institute, has retained Newton D. Baker and James M. Beck to examine the constitutionality of the Tennessee Power Authority and other electric-power enterprises of the federal government. His distinguished counsel has reported back that the legislation establishing the T.V.A. is "palpably unconstitutional," but also, just in case this barrel is loaded with powdered sugar instead of buckshot, that even if the legislation is constitutional, the T.V.A. itself has gone far beyond the powers so given it. Thereupon under the moral and legal blessings of Messrs. Davis and Beck, the Institute has issued the following resolution:

> That the . . . Institute is of the opinion that the public interest requires an early adjudication in the courts as to whether . . . there are limits under the Constitution beyond which government may not go in using public funds to destroy by competitive construction and operation the existing investments of private capital in public utility enterprises.

"The mask is off," is the curt and proper reply of David Lilienthal, director of the T.V.A. "We now have a clear issue between the people who use electricity and those who have controlled it." Mr. McCarter's statement is no doubt the opening gun of a bitter legal campaign. But Mr. McCarter is going to need more ammunition. By the time the case reaches the Supreme Court the Institute's resolution will have to be broadened. It isn't all *"investments* of private capital." Mr. McCarter must have heard something of water once in a while, of intercompany purchases, of padded accounts. If these are irrelevant to constitutionality there is something the matter with the Constitution and the Supreme Court. Beyond this there is a more fundamental constitutional question: Haven't the American people the right to manage their own affairs; can't they produce their own power if they want to?

SERIOUS consequences may flow from Jugoslavia's attack on Hungary, made through the machinery of the League of Nations. The Jugoslavs charge that Hungary has permitted "terrorist bands" on her soil and that this makes her in part responsible for the assassination of King Alexander. Since this charge is supported by Rumania and Czechoslovakia, it carries double significance as an indication of united purpose by the members of the Little Entente. A decision by the League against

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Hungary on these grounds would have dangerous consequences. It would mean that in the future the nations would hardly dare offer sanctuary to political fugitives. In any case, it is now well established that the assassination of Alexander was the work of Croatians, victims of years of suppression by the Serbs who are in control in Jugoslavia. There is certainly less justification for criticizing Hungary as a friend of the Croats than there is for making the same charge against Germany, Austria or Italy. The action before the League is a byplay of the general European game of politics, in which France and the Little Entente are opposed to Italy and the rest of the fascist or semi-fascist group.

NEWSPAPER men on strike is something in the way of news. In Newark, New Jersey, the strike of the Newspaper Guild against The Ledger is proving a number of interesting things about this reputedly romantic but thoroughly open-shop profession. In the first place the strike has shown a gratifying solidarity among newspaper people. Lucius T. Russell, the publisher of The Ledger, had to suspend publication for two days when forty-eight men and women of his staff of fifty-six walked out in defense of eight Guild members who had been fired. Since then Mr. Russell has been getting out a paper of sorts, no local news, no photographs (and The Ledger is a tabloid!) in fact so generally shabby a job that he has hardly dared ask his readers to pay for it. More than a hundred thousand copies a day are distributed free—while the strike or Mr. Russell's funds last. In the meantime the Guild has made several reasonable demands; reinstatement of the eight discharged men and women, recognition of the Guild and the establishment of a grievance committee. Mr. Russell has met the issue with irrelevant offers to arbitrate before a group chiefly of the clergy and a scattering of prominent names, though he does not say what precise things he is willing to arbitrate and has so far stood out against negotiation with the Guild or normal arbitration before a group that knows something of the publishing business.

A LITTLE pamphlet, "You and Machines," by Professor William F. Ogburn of the University of Chicago has been banned from the C.C.C. camps. It was written especially for their use, but according to Mr. Robert Fechner, director of the C.C.C., it is "too gloomy." We have looked through the pamphlet ourselves. If it is gloomy it seems a lot less so than the machine environment from which the young men of the C.C.C. have come. It is a calm discussion of the advantages and disorders produced in society by the introduction of machine production. Surely Mr. Fechner cannot hope that his young men have never listened to a radio, seen a movie, ridden in an automobile, tried to get a job in a mass-production factory. Perhaps the crux of the difficulty is a brief section where Professor Ogburn points out that in the days of handcrafts, workers could own their own tools, but that the cost of machines runs into the millions, that "a class of factory workers was created who sold their labor to the owners of machines. The owners of machines had wealth, while the workers had little." But does Mr. Fechner think his boys don't know this already?

THE charts accompanying the article by Elizabeth Brandeis on "Wisconsin's Start on Job Insurance," in this issue of The New Republic, were prepared by our staff to indicate the extent and nature of unemployment insurance in other industrial nations. They emphasize the fact that whatever may be done about the matter in the United States this year, we shall still be behind much of the rest of the civilized world.

EVERYONE knows that the Soviet Union is an iron dictatorship ruled strictly from the top downward by a Stalinist bureaucracy utterly without mind or will of its own. All dissidents are promptly packed off to Siberia, shot or put to work on the White Sea Canal. We are therefore disturbed to think of the fate of the young friends of Litvinov's daughter. While her father was at Geneva negotiating the entry of the Soviet Union into the League of Nations he received a brief postal from her. It read: "Dear Father, My comrades tell me that if you put us into the League of Nations they won't ever speak to me again."

IN THE New Republic of November 21 appeared an advertisement which referred to Mr. I. M. Rubinow as having been "instrumental in obtaining the passage of the Ohio Law." This statement was of course erroneous. As Mr. Rubinow pointed out in our issue of November 28, the Ohio unemployment-insurance bill passed the State Assembly but was killed in the Senate.

The Great Fascist Plot

DESPITE the incredulity with which the metropolitan press has greeted General Smedley D. Butler's revelation of the Wall Street plot to induce him to lead a Fascist army of veterans on Washington and take over the government on behalf of a couple of stock brokers, we know of no good reason why it should not be true. General Butler has a dramatic temperament and a sense of publicity, but he does not habitually tell lies. There is no evidence that he is so far from sane as to have systematic delusions. His story is corroborated by a reporter who interviewed the prime movers in the affair. The fact that it was denied by the alleged conspirators carries little weight; they would certainly deny it, as long as it did not come off. And the fact that such an attempt would be silly does not make it incredible. There is no more incompetent, ignorant or reckless group of persons in the United

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States, or probably in the world, than that surrounding our speculative markets. There is no plumbing the depths of their panic and their folly. And anyone who has listened in recent months to the private conversations of the rank and file of bankers, brokers, or even many business men, can testify that there exists among a considerable number of them a temper that would easily engender attempts to upset American democracy if necessary to protect wealth and privilege. Indeed, active and conscious Fascist movements are by no means rare.

If all this be true, why should we not regard the plot more seriously? The money supposed to be ready would not, of course, have sufficed to pay an army of 500,000 men. But more might have been made available if the movement had got a start. The details of the coup d'état as revealed by General Butler sound childish indeed—forcing the President to dismiss his present Cabinet and appoint the chief conspirator Secretary of State, and then deposing Mr. Roosevelt if he would not go along, so that this dictator might succeed him—all this sounds like a story in a wood-pulp magazine. But fantasies do fill the minds of many persons, and it is probable that the plans included not merely such crude maneuvers but others more germane to ordinary publicity and politics. No, the futility of the affair lies not so much in detailed miscalculations of its sponsors as in its whole setting and direction. If we are to have a dangerous Fascist movement in this country it will have quite a different origin and leadership.

The first thing to remember about Fascism is that it springs originally, not from resistance to change on the part of the privileged, but from an insistent demand for change on the part of the masses. The people must have undergone a period of confusion and suffering, and they must have become convinced that neither traditional government nor the ruling economic powers can or will help them. A second term for Hoover would have been the ideal setting for American Fascism. A drift of Roosevelt to the right in response to the pressure of the economy leagues and the reactionary industrialists and bankers could produce the setting now. Cut down relief, do nothing to lighten a crushing debt burden, present the people with a spectacle of legislative confusion and incompetence, convince them that the existing executive has no sufficiently drastic plans for improvement and is under the thumb of sinister private interests, and you have the fields of popular sentiment plowed and harrowed for the Fascist seed.

The second point to remember is closely allied with the first. Since the conditions that are appropriate to Fascism are those giving rise to truly revolutionary sentiment among the masses, the successful Fascist leader is a man of the people, a declared opponent of the bankers and the ruling economic powers generally. Mussolini was originally a syndicalist labor leader; Hitler was an outcast house painter. In the beginning, a Fascist party is not so much the opponent as the rival of the older revolutionary and labor movements such as Communism, Socialism or trade unionism. It promises the masses something that sounds vaguely similar to the goals of such movements. It weans away their less well informed and more mercurial elements. Do not forget that the Nazis call themselves National Socialists, and that during their rise toward power much emphasis was placed on the Socialist half of the agitation. For this reason alone, anyone remotely connected with Wall Street would be an impossible burden on a Fascist movement at the beginning. If you are looking for an American dictator look for a Huey Long, not for a stock broker.

When a Fascist movement gets a start, it differentiates itself from the proponents of true social revolution by the vagueness and conflicting tenets of its creed, and by the unscrupulousness of its appeal. Everything else is sacrificed to the effort to gain power. It satisfies the demand of the young for "action" by promising them a place in the world, arming them, giving them a ritual and a sort of perverted glory, and setting them violently upon anyone who dares to oppose the movement. While promising workers socialism and the unemployed jobs, it appeals to the distressed small business man by assuring him freedom from the competition of the large, and enlists agricultural interests by envisioning a return to small self-sustaining farms and protection in the home market. At the same time it conciliates the big industrialists and bankers by inveighing against the dangers of Marxism. The fact that its promises are mutually inconsistent makes no difference; this is not detected by the untutored and is glossed over in the face of criticism by a general attack on reason, logic and science. The whole conglomerate mess is fused, for political purposes, by an emotional mysticism centered about the supposed mission of the race or nation, and hatred of scapegoats such as Jews or foreigners. Above everything, an exaltation of the leader, to whom unquestioning loyalty is exacted, satisfies a natural desire to dump one's perplexities on a messiah.

After such a movement begins to gain real strength, it is likely to be taken over by large capitalist interests, but hardly until then. They recognize it as a dangerous enemy, but one that can be converted into a useful ally against organized labor and true social revolution. Here enters another factor. If the big interests are not genuinely frightened by labor and by the trend toward Socialism, they are not so likely to support a movement of this unconventional and unreliable character. Thus the strength of the labor movement itself, and the intensity of its challenge to the existing system, is a factor in the success of Fascism. To prevent Fascism, a genuine labor movement must not only be strong, but strong enough to dominate the situation. It cannot with impunity seriously threaten revolution for long without achieving it.

A Fascist movement, in turn, is not likely to be

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successful in the end without substantial and widespread backing from moneyed interests. Without such backing, its hectic course can be reversed; it is likely to die down as quickly as it rises, since its intellectual and institutional foundations are not solid. (Nazism was actually waning before Hitler became Chancellor.) With plenty of money, however, it can pay its armed cohorts, buy its uniforms, stage its demonstrations and use all the unscrupulous technique of modern propaganda. And at the crucial moment it can seize the government with the approval of the capitalists already in power behind the scenes.

We are, so far, protected against Fascism in the United States by the fact that the national administration is doing something about the depression, however ineffectively, and that large numbers of people have confidence in it. We are protected by the fact that Congress has acted and not just debated. We are protected by the fact that the larger aggregations of capital are not seriously alarmed about immediate revolution. It may also be true that such a movement would have harder sledding in this country than in Italy and Germany because of our longer tradition of democracy and the lack here of the national inferiority complex which bedeviled both of them after the War. But if actual conditions become and remain bad enough, a revolutionary crisis will eventually arise. Then the only thing that can save us is an intelligent ability to distinguish the true revolution from the false, a well informed movement of workers and their allies, strong and resolute enough to prevail.

Scottsboro to Date

WHEN IN April of 1931 the trials of nine Negro boys for rape ended in Scottsboro, Alabama, the proceedings, conducted in an atmosphere charged with excitement and hostility against the defendants, had consumed just four days. All nine boys had been found guilty, eight had been sentenced to the electric chair. In the case of the ninth, fourteen-year-old Roy Wright, a mistrial had been declared, eleven jurors wishing to send him also to the chair, the twelfth holding out for life imprisonment. This was the beginning of the famous Scottsboro case, now a burning issue throughout the world to all those concerned with the rights of minority groups.

The filing of petitions for writs of certiorari in the Supreme Court of the United States, within the last two weeks, in the cases of Clarence Norris and Haywood Patterson by lawyers representing the International Labor Defense, marks a new stage in that organization's vigorous fight to save the lives of the Scottsboro boys. Up to the actual filing of these appeals there was considerable doubt as to what lawyers would represent the boys, both the I.L.D. and Samuel Leibowitz (originally retained by the I.L.D. to defend the boys in the Decatur trials) claiming to have exclusive retainers from the defendants. There is evidence to show that the boys, presumably under strong pressure from both sides, did change their minds on this point a number of times and gave exclusive retainers alternately to lawyers retained for the appeal by the I.L.D. and to Mr. Leibowitz. The latest retainer, however, supported by affidavits signed by both Norris and Patterson, states unequivocally their desire to be represented by the I.L.D. lawyers. The defense of all the boys has been conducted by this organization since shortly after their first trial, but substantial financial contributions to this defense have also been made by such other organizations as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

If the Supreme Court decides to grant the writs and consider the constitutional points involved in the appeals, it will be the second time it passes on the rights of these defendants. Patterson has now been condemned to death in the electric chair three times by an Alabama jury, and Norris twice. Their conviction and that of the six other defendants sentenced was set aside by the court on the earlier occasion. The Supreme Court held at that time that their constitutional rights had been violated at the first trial in Scottsboro in that they had not had adequate counsel or opportunity to confer with such counsel and to prepare for trial.

On Patterson's second trial before Judge Horton in Decatur, Alabama, in April, 1933, he was again convicted and sentenced to death, but Judge Horton later granted the motion of the defense for a new trial on the grounds that the verdict was against the weight of evidence and that the testimony of the state's chief witness, Victoria Price, was unreliable. In the subsequent trials held in Decatur in December, 1933, before Judge W. W. Callahan, Norris and Patterson were again found guilty and condemned to death. Ever since they have been confined in the death house at Kilby Prison in Montgomery. Five of the remaining defendants are still awaiting their second trials in the Jefferson County jail in Birmingham and the cases of Eugene Williams and Roy Wright, who were fifteen and fourteen, respectively, at the time of their arrest in March, 1931, have been transferred to the jurisdiction of the Juvenile Court. It is, however, within the discretion of this court to return the jurisdiction to the circuit court by deciding that the boys are "incorrigible."

The present appeal to the Supreme Court is based on the violation of the defendants' constitutional rights by the systematic exclusion of Negroes both from the grand jury that indicted them and the petit juries that convicted them on both occasions. At the trial held in Decatur last November Judge Callahan disregarded evidence that tended to prove this and ruled that the conclusive evidence presented by the defense to show that the jury rolls had been tampered with was insufficient to cause him to "im-

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pugn the honor of sworn jury officials." In the Patterson case Judge Callahan further refused the defense an overnight adjournment to allow it to receive the deposition of Ruby Bates, the second alleged rape victim, recanting her earlier testimony. Ruby Bates at this time was seriously ill in a New York hospital and the deposition was already in the mails when the defense's request was made. As a result the deposition, which was introduced as evidence in the Norris case, was not available to Patterson. Judge Callahan in the Patterson case also refused to allow evidence introduced at the earlier trial before Judge Horton which tended to discredit Victoria Price as a witness, forgot in his charge to the jury, until reminded by the defense lawyers, to instruct them how they could acquit the defendant, and raised the color line against the defendant in the following words, though he had previously ruled that "consent" was not an issue in the case:

> When the woman charged to have been raped is white there is a very strong presumption under the law that she did not yield voluntarily to the defendant, a Negro, and this is true whatever station in life the prosecutrix may occupy. Whether she is the most despised, ignorant and abandoned woman of the community or a spotless virgin and daughter of a home of luxury and learning.

All these facts were recited in the motion for a new trial made before Judge Callahan in Decatur on February 24, 1934. This motion was stricken out on the plea of State's Attorney General Thomas E. Knight on the ground that Alabama statute law required that such a motion be made before the expiration of the term of court in which the trial took place. Judge Callahan acceded to this plea despite the fact that he had previously granted the defense thirty days in which to make the motion, within which time the motion was made. Meanwhile, however, the Alabama court term had ended and a motion was no longer permissible. The Judge nevertheless twice granted adjournments in which the prosecution acquiesced.

The Attorney General again took unfair advantage of a technicality by moving to strike out the bill of exceptions in the Patterson case. This, a condensation of the voluminous record, because of the striking out of the motion for a new trial, had to be filed ninety days after the judgment of conviction, although the defense had expected to have ninety days from a denial of their motion. Mr. Knight had recited in his application to strike out on February 24 that judgment had been entered on December 6, at the time sentence was imposed. The bill of exceptions was, in both cases, filed within ninety days from that date. Indeed, fearing some further trickery by the prosecution, effort was made to have the Patterson bill filed by March 1, ninety days from the verdict, the earliest date that might possibly be selected. But for an airplane smash-up this plan would have succeeded. When the appeals in both cases came before the Alabama Supreme Court in May, Mr. Knight claimed that the Patterson bill was late on the ground that judgment had been entered on the earlier date. The Supreme Court of Alabama accepted this contention, despite Mr. Fraenkel's argument that Mr. Knight's previous declaration about the date of the judgment should in common decency preclude him from now claiming otherwise, but in its opinion the state court mentioned none of the facts. Because of the striking out of the bill of exceptions the state court passed on none of the points peculiar to the Patterson case, and in effect denied him a review. In the Supreme Court of the United States, accordingly, Osmond K. Fraenkel and Walter H. Pollak, two noted constitutional lawyers, will argue that Patterson has been denied that fair trial to which he is entitled under the United States Constitution.

As a first step in connection with the appeals to the United States Supreme Court Mr. Fraenkel obtained a stay of the execution from the state court. That date, originally December 7, 1934, is now fixed at February 8, 1935. If the Supreme Court grants the applications to review, a further stay will be obtained.

Whatever the decision of the Supreme Court in the present appeal may be, the innocence of the nine defendants has long since been established in the minds of all fair-minded people who have followed the trials and know the facts. It is a record of brutality, chicanery, violence and injustice on one side—relieved only at one point by Judge Horton's action in setting aside the second Patterson verdict —and of determined, unremitting and courageous struggle for justice on the other. Whatever criticism may fairly be made of the defending organization, whatever disagreements have arisen between its members and others interested in the case, however much liberal Southerners may resent its wholesale impugning of the Southern justice meted out to Negroes, the fact remains that the defense has thoroughly discredited all of the prosecution's chief witnesses at the bar of public opinion. It produced the recantation of her earlier damaging testimony by Ruby Bates and the supporting testimony of her companion, Lester Carter. It has shown overwhelmingly the unreliability of Victoria Price and of practically all of the chief witnesses for the state who, with the exception of the doctor who examined the girls and whose testimony was on the whole favorable to the defense, have been entangled in a maze of contradictory and improbable statements. It has shown rank prejudice and unfairness on the part of jury commissioners, prosecuting attorneys and the trial judge. These are facts which Southerners who resent Northern interference and radical propaganda will have to deal with if they wish surcease from either. It has been said seriously in extenuation of this kind of justice that Alabamans resent Communist agitation and the charges made by radicals that the Scottsboro boys were framed. But these charges have now been proved to the hilt

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and agitation has in fact saved the boys from death in the chair next week as a result of such framing. The remedy for agitation lies in the hands of the Supreme Court and of Alabamans themselves. It lies in the speediest possible justice that can be done to the nine innocent boys unjustly imprisoned now for nearly four years. Until such belated justice is done agitation will and must go on.

Fog Over Washington

THERE have been few incidents more illustrative of what has come to be known as "the Washington Run-Around" than the recent experience of a committee representing the striking employees of the Macaulay Company, book publishers of New York City, which went to Washington to seek a decision from the National Labor Relations Board. What happened was described by Mr. Nathan Asch in an article published in the November 27 issue of The New Masses. The strikers, who borrowed two automobiles to make the trip, were accorded all the courtesy that seems to characterize the Roosevelt administration. All doors were opened to them and they were permitted to see everyone they asked to see. There was no official unpleasantness and no bureaucratic red tape. If the delegation had gone to pay a few social calls and see the sights of Washington, the visit would have been a great success.

Its purpose, however, was much more serious. A ruling of the Regional Labor Board in New York, calling upon the Macaulay Company to reinstate its discharged employees, has been consistently ignored and the strikers' committee wanted to find out if the National Board would help them to bring the recalcitrant company to terms. The committee went to the offices of the Board and was granted an immediate interview with Dr. H. A. Millis, the Board's acting chairman. Dr. Millis was very cordial and polite, and expressed a willingness to do everything he could, but explained apologetically that he had to attend another hearing. One of his assistants, Mr. Benedict Wolf, would act in his stead.

Mr. Wolf appeared, carrying the file containing all the material relative to the Macaulay dispute, but he seemed to know very little about it. He was very polite, very friendly and very vague. He was not sure, for one thing, whether the Board had any right to take legal action against the Macaulay Company because when the strike started the company had not yet signed a code. He did not see how, until this question was resolved, he could do anything. When asked if it were not his impression that the President recommended that workers organize prior to the making of a code, so that they might help to shape it, he said this was not his impression. He was sorry, very sorry, but he did not think there was much he could do.

The strikers, able to stay in Washington only one day, then went to the White House. They wished to find out if Mr. Wolf's opinions prevailed everywhere. In a few minutes Mr. Marvin McIntyre, the President's secretary, came out. Mr. McIntyre was his usual poised, urbane, well mannered self. He listened to the strikers with great sympathy and immediately arranged another interview with Dr. Millis.

Doctor Millis, when seen this second time, was possibly a little less polite. He would not speak of the ruling of the Regional Labor Board; nor would he say when the National Board would decide whether it could take up the Macaulay case. Perhaps by the following Monday the Board might be able to make up its mind.

Several Mondays have passed since then, but no word has come from Dr. Millis. This, of course, is not surprising. The experience of the Macaulay strikers has been the experience of most of the strikers' committees that have gone to Washington. They all report the same cordial affability and the same irritating vagueness.

But the overworked, harassed members of the National Labor Relations Boards should not be saddled with all the blame. They are lost, along with hundreds of their fellows, in the fog of uncertainty and indecision that hangs over Washington. The Department of Justice has shown a singular reluctance to proceed against recalcitrant employers —witness other and more important situations such as in the Houde and Weirton cases—and the power of the National Board, which could be considerable, has been greatly reduced by this significant hesitancy. And the attitude of the Department of Justice is caused, obviously enough, by the attitude of the President himself. If Washington officialdom cannot make up its mind, if timidity and caution seem to be the order of the day, it is largely because Mr. Roosevelt cannot make up his mind. As soon as he formulates a definite program, and adheres to it, the fog will quickly lift. Meanwhile, to the despair of persons like the Macaulay strikers, who have not only their jobs but their futures at stake, the Washington run-around goes on.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AND COPYRIGHT, 1934, IN THE U. S., BY THE NEW REPUBLIC, INC., 421 WEST 21ST STREET, NEW YORK CITY. BRUCE BLIVEN, PRESIDENT, DANIEL MEBANE, TREASURER.

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Machinery Turns Nationalist

LONDON, according to the customary ritual, has just "remembered." For two minutes of silence it thought of the million men whose lives we sacrificed over an Archduke's grave. The King, with his sword-hilt just visible, as it protrudes from his Field Marshal's greatcoat, has laid a wreath on their cenotaph. Through the open window I can hear in the distance the "Last Post" and the singing of "O God Our Help in Ages Past." It was once a moving ceremonial that fused the millions of this city into a sudden realization of their fraternity. It touched our reserves of faith. It was our way of celebrating the completion of the war that had ended wars.

Fifteen years have passed since first we celebrated Armistice Day in this fashion, and already it is a mere survival. We know too well what we shall hear when the wheels turn again, and men's tongues are loosened. The factory that was making machine guns overtime on this Sabbath day stood still, indeed, for two minutes, but when the silence was over, it is not recorded that any revolt of horror and shame seized its staff; they went on making machine guns. Nor, for all one can hear, has any change came over the conversations about naval disarmament. The Japanese are still resolved that they must have a fleet second to none on the seas. The British are still bent on obtaining seventy instead of the fifty cruisers that had hitherto sufficed for their defense. It was not our dead that we mourned on this day. It was our faith that we buried again.

What has happened to us, that it costs us a shock to recall the illusions of the Wilsonian era? A historian who carried us analytically through the intervening years would rob us of our right to indulge our naïve surprise. "What!" he might ask us, "you expected peace and disarmament and the reign of law after the brigandage of Versailles? You really thought that your League would win the loyalty of the Germans, by banishing them for five years as untouchables beyond its gates? Your League turned a blind eye when the Poles took Vilna and the French marched into the Ruhr; why should it surprise you that it watched in passivity the rape of Manchuria? Why in this lawless world should you expect that men will arm on any but a competitive footing? The Japanese claim is perfectly rational. The seas in the last resort are one; anything less than a supreme navy is useless. The same reasoning in a few years will apply to the air."

But was Wilsonian liberalism in fact so far from the realities of our time as we are now disposed in our bitterness to suppose? It would have been no more than an ethical aspiration, unless it had had its foundation in the economic relations of peoples. That, if we probe our memories, we supposed that it had. We believed that we lived in a cosmopolitan era of interdependence. We were necessary to one another, and that intimately and over a great range of life—this was the commonplace of rhetoric in those far from distant days. The earth, with some irritating reserves, had become a single market place. Capital flowed with an approach to freedom across the frontiers. So sensitive was the mechanism of finance that a change in the rediscount rate in New York influenced the pace and temperature of business in every city of the Old World. As men work so will they think. Internationalists in their economic life, could they much longer refrain from drawing the political consequences? Our nationalism, our concept of sovereignty, belonged to the age of the horse and the sailing ship. Electricity and the internal combustion engine must in the long run render frontiers obsolete and national armaments an anachronism. Given this reading of the economic drift of our age, the liberal who had sat at Wilson's feet could watch without dismay the early stumblings and inadequacies of the League. Moments had been missed; statesmen had played us false, but mechanism would carry us forward by the inevitable rotation of its wheels into the epoch of international order.

The slump crashed upon these cheerful musings. The international market shrank: the golden measure of value broke in our hands: that celebrated flow of capital across frontiers dried up like a summer rivulet, while debtors of a classical respectability defaulted. Above the frontiers rose tier on tier of barriers—tariffs, quotas and exchange restrictions. With perfect fidelity politics reflected this rampant economic nationalism. Germany turned fascist, adjusted herself to economic self-sufficiency, rearmed and quitted the League. Its shrinkage and its series of major failures were post-slump phenomena. The international mind, the cosmopolitan morality that might have concerned itself with the rights of China and observed covenants and pacts with loyalty, had faded out with the international market.

What, then, shall we say? Shall we comfort ourselves with the reflection that the slump will pass, is indeed in its worst phase over, and that a sense of international duty will return with prosperity? Is there a rhythm in the sense for international order that follows the business cycle? Will the Japanese walk out of Mukden and back to Geneva, if and when the gold standard is restored? On the day when employment touches the level of 1929, shall we by a common impulse scrap our battleships? But one need waste no satire on this

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naïve optimism. The world, during this interval of slump, has reorganized itself permanently on the new basis of relative self-sufficiency. The preferences hastily negotiated at Ottawa will one day be revised, but few would doubt that the British Empire is permanently on a basis of preferential trade.

Let us look a little more closely at the economic background that influenced the Wilsonian liberal. He got it from Adam Smith, and he could cite, to justify the theory of that sage, a whole century of cumulative experience that seemed to confirm his reasoning. Throughout the nineteenth century and for some years of the twentieth, the international division of labor was on the whole the dominant fact in the world's production and exchange. The general rule was specialization. Human aptitudes, climate, soil and the tricks of geology in scattering coal, iron and oil unevenly over the earth, did tend to distribute to this people an advantage in textile manufacture, to another the supremacy in heavy industry, while the rest devoted themselves to the raising of the appropriate crop. This was the basis of the economic interdependence on which the liberal relied when he declared that political federation, or some approach to it, must one day reflect the worldwide cosmos of trade.

This background has changed so rapidly under our eyes that few of us have grasped its political implications. Certainly machinery drives us. But its trend is not toward interdependence and the subdivision of the world's labor. We know what the growing automatism of machinery means within our own frontiers. It is breaking down the old division between the skilled and the unskilled. But have we grasped its international significance? Ten years ago the Lancashire weaver laughed proudly at the suggestion that a Bombay "native" could compete with him. He laughs no longer. With the automatic loom the human factor has become negligible. Generations of inherited skill go for nothing: intelligence and stamina count for little. In varying degrees the same thing is true over the whole range of manufacturing industry. In proportion as automatism spreads, the advantages of international specialization vanish. There are still differential factors—skilled management and scientific organization—but these too tend to even out, and often favor the upstart industry. Nor is this all. The replacement of steam power by electricity has emancipated industry from the shackles of geology. Proximity to a coal field is no longer indispensable. The pace at which various regions and peoples take advantage of the new conditions varies indefinitely, but the general tendency is clear enough. Science and mechanism are bringing us rapidly back to the state of the early civilizations, in which every village had its own smith, its own weaver and its potter. The unit, however, is not the village. It is the national state, or the empire.

"Your case," the reader may object, "is plausible, if you confine your attention to manufacture, but what of foodstuffs and raw materials? You cannot grow cotton in Lancashire, or draw gasoline from London clay." Here admittedly the change is slower, but here also the tendency is apparent, and politics can speed it up. Napoleon's continental blockade led to the invention of beet-sugar. The Jewish blockade of Germany has already produced some textile substitutes much advertised at the Leipzig Fair. The doubt as to whether the Suez Canal can be kept open in the next world war caused the British Admiralty to foster the experimental distillation of fuel oil from coal. Two or three ways are known by which synthetic rubber can be produced. It wants only the fear of a blockade, or an admiral's doubt whether he can keep the sea-roads open, for research to turn with all its ingenuity to the perfecting of one of them. Cotton retreats steadily before artificial silk. Cobden would have drawn two lines across the map of the world, and argued that Providence had legislated for free trade in wheat, since its profitable growth was possible only within them. The plant-breeders have widened the wheat belt miraculously since his day. The Russians have found that they can grow excellent tea in the valleys of the Caucasus. There are limits perhaps to this process of adaptation and substitution. But one may fairly conclude that if one cares to pay for self-sufficiency, the chemists and the botanists will work for it as ardently as ever the navigators and the conquistadores worked to ransack the Indies for exotic spices and precious fabrics.

Is this, then, the economic background that explains why Geneva's light grows dim and armaments tend to increase? On the day when the first car equipped with synthetic rubber tires is propelled by distilled coal gasoline to the portals of the Palace of Peace, it may as well shut its doors. There are those, indeed, who say in Europe, as in America, that this economic isolation will herald a new age of innocence. Lacking for nothing, each within his borders, what grounds can we have for disputation with our neighbors? *Sancta simplicitas!* Each of us has evolved an industrial mechanism that demands a market of a given area. Within what limit will you be pleased to suffice unto yourself? Lancashire and the Black Country have their empire. But over what radius would the volcanic energies of the Ruhr throw its produce? Over how many backs must Nobe and Osaka rule, that they may drape them in cotton cloth? The automatism of machinery ends specialization, but with it the free market ends and an age of intensified imperialism begins.

These, then, were the reflections that came to me as the silence ended, and the ritual of remembrance closed.

H. N. BRAILSFORD.

London, Armistice Day.

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Security for Americans

III: *Wisconsin's Start on Job Insurance*

THE FIRST American unemployment-compensation law came into operation in Wisconsin on July 1 of this year. Some 3,200 Wisconsin employers are now contributing to their several unemployment-reserve funds at the rate of two percent on payrolls. Their first month's contributions totaled more than $450,000. By July 1, 1935, when cash benefits become payable, these employer-financed reserves should aggregate close to five million dollars.

Wisconsin's act has thus given definite reality and focus to the movement for American legislation in this field. While other states have hesitated, and while Washington is debating how comprehensive a program of economic security should be recommended to Congress this winter, one state is actually accumulating cash reserves to compensate laid-off workers. Although benefits do not begin generally under the law until reserves have been built up for one year, seventy companies have already guaranteed their 3,000 Wisconsin workers two-thirds of full-time work and wages for at least forty-two weeks of the current year. Many other workers are now employed on a year's salary contract, as a direct result of the act even before it is fully operative.

Of course no one claims that this new type of law will soon or completely solve the problem of job security. But Wisconsin's step forward has both concreteness and direction. Through the first American law attacking in a limited but constructive way the central problem of steady employment, the state has maintained its tradition of thirty years' standing. Under the leadership of its Progressive movement Wisconsin has repeatedly pioneered in specific experiments in the use of government to deal constructively with particular social and economic ills. Wisconsin Progressives have not expected the present economic system to be scrapped entirely. But they have consistently refused passively to accept its defects, or to limit the use of government to mere alleviation of the resultant suffering. Instead, they have tried in varied fields to utilize the force of social control to make the capitalist system function more nearly in the public interest. The Wisconsin unemployment-compensation law is in keeping with this philosophy. It is designed not merely to provide relief for the victims of unemployment but in some measure at least to reduce their numbers. It seeks to do this by giving the competitive advantage to the business concern that manages to provide steady employment for its workers.

Chapter 108 of the Wisconsin Statutes requires [illegible] ployment-compensation act departs from European precedents and from various bills proposed else-

two percent on payroll to his unemployment-reserve fund, with an additional one-tenth percent for the administration of the act. No contributions are made by workers or taxpayers. The benefits to be paid after July 1, 1935, are 50 percent of wages with a maximum of $10 per week, one week of benefits to be paid for every four weeks of employment within the previous year, with a maximum of ten weeks per year, after a two weeks' waiting period. Certain groups of workers are excluded from the operation of the act—for the most part those customarily excluded under other labor laws.

In some of its structure and much of its procedure the new Wisconsin law resembles the unemployment-insurance systems of Europe. Funds are collected to be used to pay benefits to unemployed workers as a matter of right, on the basis of their previous wages and employment. A worker is eligible for benefits only when unemployed through no fault of his own. But he cannot be denied benefits either for refusing to accept a new job open because of a labor dispute or for refusing wages or conditions below the standards prevailing in the community for such work. To encourage reasonable spreading of employment, no benefit is payable to a partially employed worker earning as much as his benefit for total unemployment. Below that point he is entitled to enough in benefits to make up the difference (subject to the limit of benefits due him in the year).

Impartial machinery is provided for deciding disputed claims to benefits; the state's public employment offices are to be extended; and the Wisconsin Industrial Commission—charged with administering the labor laws of the state—is also instructed to set up advisory committees of representatives of employers and workers to aid it in carrying out the purposes of the act. A central committee of this sort has been functioning since early in 1932. Thus organized labor has had a vital share in the law's administration to date. It will, along with organized employers, be represented on local appeal boards to decide disputed benefit claims. Hence the frequent charge that Wisconsin's "company" reserve plan may stimulate "company" unionism is largely a verbalism. Company unions will hardly gain by an impartial government review of disputed cases with organized labor represented. Similarly, actual practice under this act has refuted the claim that workers must contribute in order to obtain adequate participation in a law's operation.

In two important respects the Wisconsin unem-

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where in this country. (1) The total contribution is paid by the employer, instead of being matched either by the employee or by the employee and the state. In this respect the valid precedent of American accident-compensation laws was followed. (2) The Wisconsin act uses these employer contributions to create separate unemployment reserves, distinct for each business unit, instead of pooling all these funds on a statewide insurance basis to spread the risk more widely. Each company's separate reserve fund is either deposited with and invested by the state, or under its strict supervision; but the funds are entirely separate for benefit purposes, whether held by the state or under an "exempted" plan.

Thus every business unit in Wisconsin subject to the act is now building up its own unemployment reserve to be used solely to pay benefits to any workers whom it may lay off after July 1, 1935. In so far as a concern manages in the future to operate fairly steadily with a nearly constant number of employees, its reserve will obviously accumulate. When it reaches an amount equal to $55 per employee the employer's required contribution rate will drop to one percent on payroll. If, and so long as, the reserve amounts to $75 per employee, no further contribution will be required. In short, each employer's rate varies directly with his own unemployment record. He does not buy unemployment "insurance" and stop there; rather he shoulders this business cost, and gains fully by reducing it.

In the face of the present demand for an all-embracing security program the Wisconsin act is obviously limited in scope. It certainly is not designed to assure to everyone a minimum of subsistence from the cradle to the grave. Its contribution rate is too low, its benefits too small, too limited in duration and too related to previous employment. In many cases benefits will have to be scaled down, because a two-percent contribution rate will not create adequate reserves. Of course the importance of the Wisconsin act can hardly be measured now in quantitative terms. Its contribution rate will be raised and its benefits made more adequate when similar state laws become widespread. Even then it will constitute only a part—though a basic one—in a more complete and varied program for economic security. Adequate provision for those too old to work, and some way of keeping the ones who are too young at school and out of the labor market, will certainly be needed, and many other measures as well. Drastically shortened hours and extensive public works will be needed to absorb what now looks like a permanent labor surplus.

COMPULSORY UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE PLANS

Country and Year of Original Law	*Contributions per Week*[2]	*Amount and Duration of Benefit*	*Number Insured*
AUSTRIA 1920	Regular, ½ by workers, ½ by employers. Emergency, ¼ workers, ¼ employers, ⅙ provinces, ⅓ federal government.	Varies with wages and family. Regular, 30 weeks. Emergency, varies according to need.	Nov. 30, 1933: 383,293 unemployed; 300,477 receiving benefits; 1,300,000 insured.
BULGARIA 1925	Workers, employers, state, each 1 lev (1.32 cents).	10 lev per day.[1] 12 weeks in any one year.	1933-34: Approximately 400,000.
GERMANY 1927	Regular, workers 6¼ percent of wages; emergency, ⅘ by state, ⅕ by local governments.	Varies with wages and family. Regular, 13 weeks. Emergency, 45-58 weeks.	December, 1933: Total unemployed, 4,059,055; receiving benefits, 3,140,509.
GREAT BRITAIN 1911	Regular,[1] workers, employers, state, each 10d. (21.2 cents). Transitional (emergency), all by state.	17s per week ($4.44).[1] Regular, 26 weeks. Transitional, extended according to individual need.	June, 1934: 12,600,000 insured; 2,092,586 unemployed; 1,979,378 receiving benefits.
IRISH FREE STATE 1911	Workers 9d., employers 10d.,[1] state 2/7 of joint contribution of workers and employers.	15s per week ($3.93).[1] One day's benefit for each weekly contribution.	1933: Average number unemployed, 73,067; receiving benefits, 20,065; 360,000 insured.
ITALY 1919	Workers 0.35 lira to 1.05 lira, employers pay same amount.	1.25 lira to 3.75 lira (32 cents) per day; 90-120 days.	Feb. 28, 1934: 1,103,550 unemployed; 4,000,000 now insured.
POLAND Manual Workers 1924	Workers ½ percent of wages, employers 1½ percent, state 1 percent.	30-50 percent of wages, 13 weeks.	Dec. 31, 1933: 722,324 insured; 50,522 receiving benefits.
Salaried Workers 1926	Workers and employers in variable ratio according to three wage classes of workers.	30-100 percent of wages, 6 months.	October, 1933: 227,730 insured; 16,220 receiving benefits.
QUEENSLAND 1922	Workers, employers, state, each 6d.	14s. to 17s. per week.[1] 13 weeks.	Total insured: 170,000; benefits paid, 1933: 50,023.
SWITZERLAND (Twelve cantons and Zurich)	Varies with type of occupation, risks involved and laws of various cantons.	Up to 50 percent of wages, 90 days. Maximum for single adult male, 10 francs per day. ($3.25).	Total number insured, 1934: 250,429.

[1] Rates for single adult male.
[2] All translations into U. S. currency [illegible]

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The Wisconsin law has been freely criticized not merely because of its limited scope but even more because of its basic and distinguishing feature, the employer-financed company-reserve funds. It is asserted that this arrangement mistakenly assumes that employers are solely responsible for unemployment and could prevent all of it if they chose. Proponents of the Wisconsin plan of course agree that unemployment has many causes over which employers have varying degrees of control. But they do not conclude in consequence that all the unemployed should be compensated from one big state or nation-wide fund in which contributions from employers, workers and taxpayers should be merged—with little or no attempt to reduce unemployment. Instead they prefer to attack the unemployment problem on various fronts, to handle the unemployed in a variety of ways and to make employers responsible for that group of the unemployed and that kind of unemployment most closely related to them. That means the unemployment of willing and competent workers, laid off because of the intermittent and irregular operation of industrial concerns that occurs year after year.

In effect the new law requires every concern employing labor to assume certain obligations toward its employees and toward the community in which it operates. Henceforth it cannot with impunity hire (and often import) workers, and then leave them without resources, to be supported by the public whenever it does not need their services. In this way the Wisconsin act addresses itself primarily to the kind of unemployment that is most readily preventable.

Just how much can be accomplished by a concerted drive to prevent unemployment through regularization cannot be stated in advance. Its possibilities are almost entirely unexplored. Certainly proponents of the Wisconsin act do not expect miracles. But they are impressed by the record of many scattered concerns (often in so-called seasonal industries) which managed before the depression to give nearly year-round employment, and which even in the past few years have maintained a degree of stability far in excess of their competitors. A definite financial and psychological incentive in the form of a company unemployment reserve with a rate of contribution diminishing as regularization is achieved is quite likely to induce many others to follow the example of the pioneer "regularizers."

VOLUNTARY UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE PLANS

Country and Year of Original Law	*Subsidies*	*Amount and Duration, Normal Benefits, Single Person*[1]	*Number Insured*
BELGIUM 1920	State pays amount equal to ⅔ of that paid by members of the various insurance plans.	Varies according to need; maximum is ⅔ of normal wage; duration, 48 to 60 days.	Nov. 30, 1933: Unemployed, 383,293; receiving benefits, 300,477.
CZECHOSLOVAKIA 1921	State subsidy four times the amount paid by trade unions from dues.	3 to 18 crowns per day (18 crowns, equals 75 cents). 26 weeks' duration, plus 13 weeks' emergency benefit.	December, 1933: 233,943 receiving benefits; total insured, 1,300,000.
DENMARK 1917	State, 15 to 90 percent of members' contributions; local governments pay ⅓ of state subsidy.	1 to 3 kroner (68 cents) per day, 70 to 190 days.	During year 1932-33, 202,068 received benefits; 306,000 insured.
FINLAND 1917	State subsidy, 60 to 90 percent of benefits paid.	10 to 30 marks (67.5 cents) per day, up to 120 days in any one year.	No figures available. (New 1934 plan replaced old 1917 law.)
FRANCE Insurance Assn's. 1905	State, 60 to 90 percent of benefits; local governments pay varying amounts.	Limited to 8 francs (53 cents) per day, up to 180 days.	300,000.
Municipal Funds 1914	State, 60 to 90 percent of benefits.	Limited to 7 francs per day, no time limit.	All workers in districts covered.
NETHERLANDS 1916	Federal and local governments both pay an amount equal to ½ that paid by workers.	Limited to 70 percent of wages, with duration limits ranging from 36 to 90 days.	November, 1933: 502,418 members; 29,389 receiving benefits.
NORWAY 1915	State subsidy, ½ of benefits paid; local governments pay ⅔ of state subsidy.	Limited to 50 percent of wages, up to 13 weeks in any one year.	1932: 46,760 insured; 10,512 receiving benefits.
SPAIN 1931	State subsidy, ½ of benefits paid.	Limited to 60 percent of wages, up to 60 days in any one year.	1934: Total membership, 49,983.
SWEDEN 1934	State subsidy, varying with amount of benefits paid.	2 to 6 crowns ($1.58) per day; 90-120 days.	Probable membership, 1935: 350,000.
SWITZERLAND 1924	Federal subsidy, 30 to 40 percent of benefits; cantonal, 10 to 45 percent of benefits.	Limited to 50 percent of wages, up to 90 days.	1933: 273,551.

1 All translations into U. S. currency based on exchange rates as of May 1, 1934.

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With only a few months' experience to go on, some evidence is already accumulating in Wisconsin on this point. Those who are administering the new law find that its company-reserve feature has started many employers on a study of their employment problems. They are beginning to figure out how to run their businesses to keep their men as steadily at work and their reserves as nearly intact as possible. With similar laws enacted in other states, regularization might tend to advance and spread at a geometric rate of progress, since every concern that operates steadily thereby steadies the markets in which it buys and sells. Steadier year-round operation by the automobile industry, for instance, would make greater stability possible in many related industries.

Even if unemployment should prove (or were known to be) largely unpreventable, there would still be a definite advantage in allocating its cost in so far as possible to the industries and concerns that are its proximate cause. This can best be done through company-reserve funds. The pooled insurance schemes in operation in Europe virtually treat unemployment as an overhead cost of the entire community. Similar proposals are being urged in this country. Thus to treat all unemployment as a generalized overhead cost of society cannot be defended as economic wisdom when the effects of such a policy are analyzed.[1]

Obviously the consumer—and society in general—is best off when obtaining goods (of a given quality) most cheaply. This is possible only if the pricing system operates to indicate what really is the cheapest good, all costs considered. If the business concern which sells a given product does not carry the full cost of producing that product, the true cost will not be reflected in the price. The existing wide variation in regularity of operation as between different industries in the United States and different plants within the same industry means a wide variation in the degree to which industries and plants are carrying the entire cost of their products and reflecting them in the prices they charge. For the industry or concern that operates intermittently and frequently dumps its workers on the community to be supported until needed again, is really being subsidized by the community.

Under a pooled unemployment-insurance fund (as in Europe) this subsidy comes in large part from competitors who operate more steadily; namely, other concerns in the same industry or other industries that compete for the consumer's dollar, For instance, coal mines run irregularly, while oil refineries or water-power plants employ their workers more nearly the year round. Now, if idle coal miners were supported in part by insurance contributions from oil refineries and water-power plants, could anyone tell which is really the cheapest fuel? If the shoe factory or automobile plant which runs the year round had to subsidize the competing factory or plant which does not, there would arise a species of unfair competition that might even force out of business the truly low-cost concern.

This danger is readily apparent when we think in terms of daily or weekly wages. No one suggests that the sweatshop should be definitely subsidized by the community or by its decent competitors through a general fund to supplement sweatshop wages. The accepted remedy is a minimum wage which every individual employer in the industry must pay. The extension of the minimum-wage principle from daily to yearly wages leads to a company-reserve basis for unemployment reserves, so that each company's business costs may coincide with social costs. In this way the competitive advantage will be given to the concern that actually does produce goods most cheaply—when all the social costs are taken into account.

Nor should "insurance" advocates forget that the importance of distinguishing between high-cost and low-cost producing units is not limited to the competitive system. Distinct operating units will continue to be used under any system, since finite beings cannot run production as a single whole. These units will necessarily vary in their social efficiency. Hence each one should carry its own social costs and be judged by the showing it makes, if wasteful utilization of human and economic resources is to be avoided.

To those who have been thinking of economic security simply in terms of comprehensive social insurance on the European model, President Roosevelt's recent words come as a challenge. Millions of workers now condemned to involuntary idleness must have thrilled to his declaration: "I stand or fall by my refusal to accept as a necessary condition of our future a permanent army of unemployed."

How can those brave words be translated into reality? Past experience suggests that though the aim can be stated as a unified whole, the means of fulfilment will be not one but many. To make steady operation year in and year out the prevailing practice in industry may well be one of them. So far as we agree with the President in counting "in the future as in the past on the driving power of individual initiative, of fair private profit," the way to achieve steady operation of industry is to make its opposite a business cost of the individual concern. Then only can we harness the profit motive to our social purpose. Hence unemployment compensation on the Wisconsin model has a vital place in the general scheme. Along the road marked out by the President the taking effect of the Wisconsin law may well be recognized as a significant milestone.

ELIZABETH BRANDEIS.

The fourth article on "Security for Americans" will be by Mary Van Kleeck and will discuss the Workers' Unemployment and Social Insurance Bill.
—THE EDITORS.

[1] The "cost argument" for the Wisconsin plan given here was more fully developed in a joint article by the author and Harold M. Groves, which appeared in the March, 1934, number of The American Economic Review.

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Corn, Hogs and Drought

IT HAS rained out West. Sporadic showers have become real rains. But even that won't help much in the areas where the drought was really bad. Drought when firmly entrenched can't be routed in so short a time. Vegetable and fruit supplies for the winter are a rough 90 percent of normal. We can expect a quarter less meat than usual and pork will be 30 percent under normal. But drought means much more than this. To know, for instance, that pastures remain far poorer this year than at any other time within the last fifty years is merely to get a calm statistical view of what is happening on the farmlands.

Most farmers who have suffered from drought are looking to Washington, for long before the present emergency the federal government had of course tried to pull American agriculture back on its feet. The emergency hog-marketing campaign of the A.A.A., relief purchases of pork and corn loans were all temporary expedients designed to maintain and, if possible, improve corn and hog prices until supplies could be brought under control through a more far-reaching policy. The present corn-hog program is such a policy. It offers a series of benefit payments totaling 30 cents a bushel for corn and $5 a head for hogs. This money comes from the processing tax placed on hogs. (Hogs play the pivotal role since they alone consume over 40 percent of our corn supply). Although it is envisaged only as a two or three-year affair, parts of the program may become more permanent, for the objective is long range—a reduction of 20 to 30 percent in corn production and of 25 percent in hogs.

A Program in Action.—An eminently decentralized administration was established last winter. Rounds of educational meetings were called. County allotment committees, usually composed entirely of farmers, were elected and the farmers filed estimates of their hog production in 1932 and 1933, proving them so far as possible. Meanwhile the A.A.A. informed each state of the number of hogs it was to market during 1934. Here the program hit a snag. Farmers invariably claimed the right to more hogs (on the basis of their past production) than were granted them by their state's quota. On the other hand it was obvious that if the program were to succeed, the farmers' claims would have to be cut severely, "adjusted," as it was tactfully termed. These cuts, made during the summer, caused a great deal of tension among farmers, allotment committees and A.A.A. officials. In fact the entire program suffered a considerable loss of good will.

In many counties a cut of as much as 12 percent was necessary to reach quota figures. To do so, in many cases, allotment committees were forced to make straight cuts: each hog producer would have his claims reduced regardless of his proof of former production. These straight cuts naturally met with great disfavor. As one committeeman put it, "You might just as well tell us to go out and steal 6,000 hogs from 1,800 farms. . . . We'd never get down to our county quota if we didn't cut the farmers this way. But it isn't right; the man's entitled to those hogs." And the man when cut was irritated, often feeling that the government was discriminating against him. For their part, while admitting some errors, the government men accused many farmers of deliberate overstatement. Figures seem to back up the latter contention.

But on the whole the program has come through in good shape. Figures naturally vary from state to state and they are not yet complete. Probably 90 percent of the farmers who could have joined the movement did. The drought helped a bit. Men who hadn't expected to sign the government reduction contract did when they saw their crops drying up. And although the administrators were none too pleased to have these so-called "stragglers" come in at the last moment in June, still these latecomers did by their very actions illustrate one of the program benefits: insurance.

People on the Hoof.—The persistency of drought sufferers is remarkable. Farmers even in the worst drought areas are sitting tight, trusting to the future. But some are on the hoof, moving mostly to the West Coast, to the Ozarks, and to the Minnesota woods, there to fish and trap. However, this movement is only a trickle, as is not surprising. Farmers in the Northwest do not believe their country is fast becoming a desert, and the thought of seeking work by the day on Main Street is not enticing. When during the past fifty years you've seen your fields in drought nineteen of them, have seen hail ruin those acres three times and have watched rust creep over the land once—then you get used to a hazardous livelihood. But enough people have been uprooted to produce a housing problem.

Resettling the Farmers.—Added to the customary three "R"s, parts of the farm population are learning how to get rurally rehabilitated. Financed by the F.E.R.A., Rural Rehabilitation Divisions (or Corporations) have been set up to take those on relief off relief by reëstablishment or resettlement, or both. In Minnesota the purpose is "to take farmers unable to make a go of it and give them, if possible, capital goods instead of a monthly handout so as to reëstablish them." More ambitiously,

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South Dakota's Corporation's "immediate function will be to furnish adequate farming facilities to farmers at a low cost," by purchasing with federal funds submarginal land west of the Missouri River and transplanting farm families on those lands to more fertile, although subdivided, farms east of the river. Finally in Iowa a variation on the rehabilitation theme is being made on a subsistence basis.

The Minnesota rehabilitationists have as yet attempted little, but South Dakota, with a much bolder program and sorely needing it, has already encountered trouble. No sooner was the Corporation started in June than its experienced executive vice-president and general manager resigned because of lack of organization and authority. This difficulty is presumed to have its source with Harry L. Hopkins at Washington. This was an unfortunate send-off for the program, but worse was to happen. When the surveys determining just what could be done were finally made, it suddenly became obvious that for all the excellent intentions of its promoters, the publicity and high hopes, the scheme didn't square with reality.

What had happened? Granted powers under its charter to purchase lands held not only by the Rural Credit Banks but also those owned by insurance companies and banks, the Corporation soon discovered that banks and insurance companies were unwilling to sell their holdings at the low prices offered and that the land available was held by the Rural Credit Banks. But of this land only one one-hundredth of one percent could possibly be used for rehabilitation purposes before March 1, 1935. As a result, instead of the thousands for whom rehabilitation was expected, only a few can be affected by the program between now and March, and there are several cold months before then.

The situation in Iowa is still undeveloped. The attempt there is to take people off relief rolls by resettling them on subsistence farms of three to five acres, lending them a cow condemned by the government's cattle-buying program, second-hand implements and a chicken or two. But its director calculates that it will affect at the most 10 percent of the 250,000 people on relief. The rehabilitationists hope that a supplementary income can be found for the new class of subsisters by starting little industries. Bee-keeping, rabbit-raising, geese, everything you've ever heard of has been suggested. Even if these suggestions were put into practice, they would succeed in giving a yearly income of only $100. The dinner pails aren't going to be very full, especially when the recipient is expected to repay the grants he gets, while subsidized at a poverty level. Furthermore, it is extremely doubtful whether such programs, even in the course of years, can become large in scope. Private business's unfavorable reaction to quasi-public industries is well known, and it is difficult to imagine the normal commercial farmer, already increasingly dependent on the domestic market, sitting back while thousands of families live off their little plots. In the end most of these programs will probably show themselves to be methods, not of recovery or necessary reform, but of stabilizing farm life at a depression or near-depression level.

JULIAN S. BACH, JR.

Two Poems of Drought

I. The Dustwhirl

The dustwhirl lifts
Its tall brown columns
In a thick spiral
Beyond the road;

It slowly drifts
Steadily northeastward,
Along the high plain's
Furrow-load.

Within its depths
Are plows gone rusty,
Dry bones of cattle,
Gray paintless board:

And vast plains shadeless,
And earth slow crumbling,
And life gone empty
Without a word.

II. Song of the Buffalo-Wallow

We have bound earth with wire and plough and rail,
Have slaughtered grass, furrowed the plain, and left
Only the buffalo-wallow stark and still,
Filled with blue water, here beside the trail,

Where long ago the shaggy dark-brown brutes
Paused to snuff at the waters, take delight;
The calves ran bawling to their mothers, as
Two old bulls fought it out with blood-streaked brows.

Man was the intruder on their solitude
Here long ago; with feathers in his hair,
And arrow on his hip, he crawled to make
His lucky shot and feast behind a stone.

But now despite the plough, the rail, the wire,
Earth has enough of man; already through the sky
The shaggy beards of buffalo are cast
Up on the dustwhirl and their hoofs bear down

Upon the pitiful plumes of withered corn,
The famished cattle, and the sagging barns;
Man scorned and starved; the earth left cold, remote,
Its lonely wallows watching the wild sky.

JOHN GOULD FLETCHER,

Western Kansas, August, 1934.

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Gertrude Stein Comes Home

THE FIRST glimpse you get of her, as she trudges resolutely up on the lecture platform, is reassuring. This solid elderly woman, dressed in no-nonsense rough-spun clothes, seems at once smaller and more human than her monumental photographs or J. Davidson's squat image of her. As she looks out over the audience and thanks us, with a quick low hoot of laughter, for "controlling yourselves to 500," we laugh too, in appreciative relief, and settle back in our seats to give her the once-over. This Gertrude Stein woman may not be so crazy, after all. Some of our wariness eases off. She has made a good beginning, there's no denying that.

But why are we here? Well, there are two answers to that question. Miss Stein knows one; we know the other. She knows we have come because we are interested—not so much in her as in her writing. We know better. We are here because we are curious—not so much about her writing, which we have never read, and probably never shall, as about herself—an apparently sensible, perhaps really sane woman who has spent most of her life writing absolute balderdash, and then, by gum, a year ago published a book that was perfectly plain sailing, and got her on the best-seller lists. We want to see what this creature looks like, we want to hear what she has to say for herself.

Now that we can get a good look at her face, that too is reassuring. The photographs we have seen didn't show those deep black eyes that make her graven face and its archaic smile come alive. Her short-cropped hair doesn't look queer, it looks as right as a cap on a grandmother. And though this is her first visit home in thirty-one years, her voice is as unmistakably American—she says "Amorrican"—as any of ours. As we listen to her low-pitched, harshly pleasant sound, we realize, with further grateful relief, that we were afraid she might have added, on top of her swami-like incomprehensibility, some of the affected patter of the expatriate. But no, we can see right away that she is too stubborn to have done anything like that. Foreign parts of speech have not affected her at all: she talks in as flatly sensible an American tone as any Middle Western aunt. We also notice with approval that she indulges in no gestures—except the natural, grandmotherly one of taking her pince-nez off and putting them on; and we soon discover, with mixed feelings, that she is not a very good lecturer: she drops her voice at the end of every sentence, and talks more and more to one side of the room, so that a good third of us have to cup our ears and guess at the words we miss.

She is talking about herself, trying to explain what she has been up to all this time, and how she happens to write the way she does. It all sounds very sensible at first. She writes, she says, just the way she talks, and she tries to prove it by reading progressive examples from her books. But immediately, with the very first example, we notice a difference. That tonelessness that helps to lend an idiotic quality to her writing is emphatically absent from her reading. She reads, indeed, with an exaggerated emphasis, putting back all the italics and commas and dashes she has carefully not written. The passages she reads make startlingly good sense. A great light begins to break over us: by knowing what to accent, where to pause, we too might dig some meaning out of Gertrude Stein. It isn't true, then, that all that work of hers is just a lumberyard; there *is* a nigger in the woodpile, after all. A few of us make a mental note to try reading "Tender Buttons," say, aloud—in the strictest privacy. Something might come of it.

Quite soon she says something funny. We laugh, not very loudly, and then look aghast. Was it meant to be funny? But Miss Stein doesn't seem to mind, she is even smiling herself. What a relief! We undo another tender mental button, and laugh whenever we feel like it. Towards the end of the lecture a few of us are shaking hysterically, and at the least excuse. But she doesn't seem to notice, and most of us are still sitting solemnly enough. After the lecture she is surrounded by an apparently reverent semicircle of undergraduates, who want to know still further. Her face a little flushed now from so much talking, she answers their questions with dogmatic directness. Yes, she considers herself a genius. No, self-expression has nothing to do with it. No, it is not her job to make people understand what she writes. Yes, she feels just like everybody else; she has often said to Picasso, who is also a genius: "Do you feel any different from anybody else?" and no, neither does he.

The total impression we carry away is that of a fundamentally serious, not to say megalomaniac writer—are all really serious people megalomaniacs?—who has come back home for a visit in the happy consciousness that she has triumphed at last. Her own country, after thirty years of neglect, is delighting to honor her. Later, when you hear her in a fifteen-minute "interview" on the radio, that impression is further confirmed. Miss Stein is having a swell time, wish young Miss Stein could be here too. She loves the tall buildings, the people on the street, she had a grand time at the football game, America is certainly a wonderful country. Miss Stein is decidedly bullish on America; her enthusiasm is delightful—a delighted visitor's enthusiasm. And she really seems to believe that we have hailed her as a genius, not welcomed her as a freak. She tells her "readers" not to worry so much about understanding her. If you enjoy a thing you understand it, she says; and she wouldn't be read if she weren't enjoyed; therefore her readers understand her. Unfortunately this pretty piece of logic blinks the fact that practically nobody does read her. Some of us may have sat through "Four Saints in Three Acts" (we went

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either to have a good laugh or to feel snobbish), or we have read what the newspapers have to say about her, or perhaps "The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas," or we have taken one horrified or amused dip into one of her serious books—but if we did we hardly stayed in a minute; the water was too cold and there were too many queer fish around.

There is certainly some grudging admiration in our welcome to Gertrude Stein—even Republicans thought more of Upton Sinclair after the scare he gave them in California. We are Greek enough to reverence (or fear) as well as gibe at what we do not understand. Our intolerant, cocksure skepticism always wavers in the face of quiet certainty. But Miss Stein has been away a long time. She thinks we are polite. She is wrong: we are simply timid, unsure of our ground, unsure of hers as well. There are a lot of things in the world we don't know anything about, and she may be one of them. This incommunicable meaning of hers may even be important. Why not?—especially if the meanings we have been able to communicate with have one by one proved unimportant, meaningless or false. And so we totter reverently from her presence, and explode with laughter just outside the door. That doesn't mean, of course, that our reverence is any more fake than our laughter.

What Miss Stein does not seem to have gathered is that our altars to the Unknown God—and they are many—are at the same time sideshows, with the barker-priests always drumming up trade. If she really thinks, as she seems to, that the guarantee of her genius is the popular notice she is receiving here, she would do well to let another thirty years elapse before she tries it again. By that time she may have learned that newsboys don't care what they're shouting about so long as they sell their papers.

T. S. MATTHEWS.

The Dark Room

Close the windows, close the door—
Never go there any more.
Stop the keyhole, pull the shade,
Hiding where the corpse is laid—
Locking in the leafless tomb
Of the close and darkened room
The corpse that blackens and grows rank,
Stiffened on the polished plank,
Beneath the ceiling clear and high,
Where things that shine were not to die.

Seal the lock and let it be—
Stuff the crack and lose the key.
Though that air turn foul and thick,
It shall not leak to make you sick—
Leave it to its shuttered murk.
Make the servants do their work:
If you say nothing, they will stay,
Meals be served three times a day.

EDMUND WILSON.

Washington Notes

The Popular Mr. Richberg—Two Unsettled Issues—The Liberal-Conservative Tug of War

NOW THAT the buoyancy over the recent election has somewhat subsided and the President, with his newspaper entourage, is settled at Warm Springs for another week, it is possible to get a clearer view of the situation he has left behind him. It is not, I must report, nearly so harmonious as the eloquent addresses of various members of the Cabinet and other administration spokesmen would lead one to suppose. Undoubtedly it is true that the chief opposition to the President—to wit, the so-called business and banking interests—has been nullified for the time being. Coöperation has supplanted criticism in this element. The peace proposals came from the White House and were responded to by business and banking leaders on the general ground that there was no nourishment in resistance, that support of the President might tend to keep him in the conservative path and would not prevent them from protesting radical steps.

Such was the business philosophy, and it may turn out to be sound from their standpoint. Except for the selection of Mr. Marriner S. Eccles as Governor of the Federal Reserve Board, which did make the better informed gasp, there has been no recent administration move that could be construed as liberal, much less radical. On the contrary, the conservatives have been soothed by the dulcet words, first, of Secretary of Commerce Roper, who insists that the administration is turning right; second, by the ubiquitous Mr. Farley, who solemnly assures us that the "splendid horse sense" of the President can be counted upon not to "upset the applecart"; third, by Mr. Donald Richberg, the nearest thing we have to an Assistant President, who appears to get mellower and more conservative every month.

Mr. Richberg, once regarded with extremely hostile eyes by the more important industrial leaders, who looked upon him as a dangerous fellow, is now more or less the fair-haired boy of the business element. Even some of our more conspicuous New York bankers speak of him in the highest terms. Mr. Richberg tells us that there is not the remotest danger of inflation, that nothing could be more disastrous than any move in that direction, that this is fully appreciated by Mr. Roosevelt and no one need be apprehensive on that score. Altogether, there seems hardly a rift in the conservative lute and the general impression is given that Mr. Roosevelt, solidly supported by the industrial and financial interests, will go into this session determined to abandon further experimentation, with a program that can be labeled "sound" by the metropolitan press, and with all radicals sternly relegated to the rear.

That is the general idea, but, except for words, there seems to be slight evidence upon which to base this belief. Up to date, Mr. Roosevelt has given no real indication of the way he is going. On the contrary, he seems to me to have deliberately avoided a definite stand and to have left two extremely important issues very much up in the air. Over both of these his advisers are split. One of them is

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his so-called social-security program. For nearly a year now, he has had a committee at work preparing a plan. The dominant figure of the committee is Miss Frances Perkins, Secretary of Labor. A few days before he left, Mr. Roosevelt, in a speech or statement, declared in favor of unemployment-insurance legislation at the coming session, but clearly intimated that old-age pensions, dependent mothers and other proposals urged by the committee could wait.

At once a real division appeared. Miss Perkins, at a hastily called press conference, insisted the President had been misunderstood, conveyed the impression that she had had a hand in preparing his speech, declared that the door had not been closed to old-age pensions and other features of the program. Unquestionably, the liberal element in the administration and the so-called radicals in Congress will side with Miss Perkins. Mr. Roosevelt stayed in Washington without making any comment, for two days after Miss Perkins gave the interview pointing out that he did not mean what he said. It seems quite clear that when he returns he will be pulled one way by the conservatives, who want him to confine the social program to unemployment insurance, and the opposite way by the liberals, who feel that for him to do so would be evasive and inexcusable.

The other important issue is the old one of spending. The National Economy League has laid before the President a plan by which, he is told, he can approximately balance the budget for the fiscal year beginning June 1, 1935. His new-found business and banking friends are very keen for that. On the other side, Mr. Harold Ickes and his more liberal supporters are strongly in favor of a vastly increased public-works spending program, and most of them are opposed to cutting down the federal funds for relief. This is another decision Mr. Roosevelt has left in the air.

Compromises between the extremes are inevitable and unavoidable if at this coming session of Congress Mr. Roosevelt is measurably to hold the support of both elements. That, of course, is his desire. Quite clearly, that is the presidential strategy and has been from the start. His situation at the opening of Congress in January will be slightly different from the one he occupied in January, 1933, but in detail only. At that time it was the liberals with whom he most closely consorted and whom he consulted. This time it is the conservatives who seem in the ascendancy as advisers and the liberals who are more or less restless and resentful.

Actually, Mr. Roosevelt has taken no concrete stand on any vital issue yet to be dealt with. Personally, I still adhere to the conviction that even though he desires to slow up and turn around, the impetus is such that it cannot be done. Moreover, after the session meets, should he evince any real tendency to return to the orthodox standards and abandon any part of the social or economic program upon which he has had such remarkable liberal support, my prediction is that he will have vastly more trouble in Congress than he could get in any other way. I think Mr. Roosevelt realizes this and is anxious not to provoke the liberals. Naturally, he wants all the support he can get, but I believe, if he must have opposition, he would rather have the business interests again critical and sore than to have the liberals disgusted. Certainly he would if he is wise.

T. R. B.

Other People's Money

Recovery Through Friendly Bank Loans—Revamping the N.R.A.—The Chamber of Commerce's Bright Idea

MR. JESSE JONES, the brilliant economist and real estater at the head of the R.F.C., has just invented a new instrument of recovery. He calls it the "friendly bank loan." This is really not an invention. Our banking institutions back in the days of Coolidge and Hoover were completely riddled by "friendly loans." The R.F.C. at this moment is suing stockholders of the old Dawes' bank for a $14,000,000 loan made by the R.F.C. to that bank. That is one of the fruits of the popular "friendly loans." Yet Mr. Jones thinks our situation is so desperate that there is literally no chance for small business unless our banks are ready to extend credit "of a most friendly nature." In discussing our banking future Mr. Jones thinks that with the guarantee of bank deposits by the government and the reconstruction of banking capital, all that is needed now is a unified banking system and safe bank management.

There seems to be little doubt that all this is offered in good faith. But it is a little discouraging to those who think something can be done about the present economic system to find the highest banking figure in the administration with no ideas except that one about what should be done with our banks. It confirms, as nearly as I can make out, the fear that thinking on banking in Washington is pretty close to a complete vacuum. The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation has, indeed, brought about an overhauling of the banks and, to some extent, a correction of their capital structures. But the banks are in the hands of the men who nearly wrecked our banking system. And the fundamental principles of bad banking that put us on the rocks in 1933 have not been in any essential particular changed. For the moment the bankers are stricken with a little salutary prudence. But Mr. Jones and the President continually harass them about opening up; about taking more risk; about making friendly loans; about being, as Mr. Jones puts it, "safe but constructive."

While nothing is being done about our banks, Mr. Donald Richberg reveals each day a more settled determination to saddle the N.R.A. on the country for as long a time as he can, but, apparently, with less government supervision. The amazing fiasco of the N.R.A. seems to have made little or no impression on Mr. Richberg's bumptiousness. Last year he flung about, whenever General Johnson sent him into the breach, at everybody who dared to bring against the N.R.A. the very charges that Mr. Richberg now seems to realize are sound. But he is still talking about holding on to certain features of the N.R.A. If his speech to the manufacturers is to be accepted as a forecast of what the administration is heading toward, then in the revamped N.R.A. we shall have preserved the right of industry—that is employers—to agree on:

1. Minimum wages and maximum hours.
2. Elimination of dishonest business practices.

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3. Exact reports of production, prices, wages, employment and general economic conditions.

4. And finally complete freedom of agreement between employers and employees.

The danger lies in that second proposal—the right to agree on the elimination of dishonest business practices. In the past, whenever the government has attempted to encourage employers to enter trade agreements, the trade association used this right to agree against dishonesty as a cover for almost all the evils of production and price control. Mr. Richberg should take a little time off to study the whole history of the open-price competition movement, its application to the building industry in New York and to the codes of practice adopted under Mr. Coolidge.

No suspension of the anti-trust laws is needed for employers to get together and agree to ban dishonest practices. The Sherman Act is a law against restraints on trade, not restraints on dishonesty. As for collecting exact reports on production, prices, etc., here again is a source of great danger. Collection of complete statistical data on trade facts of all sorts is one thing. The collection and circulation of data on current and future prices are another. Apparently harmless in themselves, they can be carried on so as to amount to virtual price fixing. Mr. Richberg should take a little more time off and follow the long fight on the same subject between Herbert Hoover as Secretary of Commerce and Harry Daugherty as Attorney General.

There is no reason why data should not be collected. But the collecting should be done by the Department of Commerce and made available to the entire public. And the collection of trade statistics should not be made the pretext for under-cover production control and price fixing. None of these things requires any abrogation of any part of the anti-trust laws. The right of employers to agree among themselves, in complete collaboration with labor and the government, on minimum wages and maximum hours may be a good thing. But it will require a special statute and that is all that should be enacted into law, if that much. The N.R.A. should be scrapped. A new statute permitting employers, workers and the government to sit down together and adopt regulations covering minimum wages and maximum hours—which would be binding, after such agreement, on the entire industry—may be a good thing. As for the euphemism that freedom of agreement between employers and employees should be preserved, any attempt to get down to brass tacks and explain just what that means makes it dissolve into thin air.

I should like to have someone patiently explain to me how there can be real freedom of agreement between employers and employees when the employers are united under sponsorship of the government, while the employees, on the theory of allowing them perfect liberty of action, are split up into any number of conflicting groups. The N.R.A. consolidates the employers. It splits the employees. With that accomplished nothing can be done about collective bargaining.

One more memory of the N.R.A. is worth reviving. The President, who took the ball away from the Chamber of Commerce when he entered office, and then handed it back under the N.R.A. and then took it away again when the N.R.A. was supposed to have folded up, has now handed it back to the Chamber. The Chamber is now out to produce recovery. It begins by going about to employers begging them to buy new machinery, expand their plants, etc. But when the employers do they will run smack into the provision in so many codes that practically makes the purchase of new machinery or the expansion of plants impossible. So we will have to score one more contradiction for that most contradictory conglomeration of hostile properties—the New Deal.

JOHN T. FLYNN.

Artists among the Flickers

IN VERTOV'S "Three Songs about Lenin" the Soviets come forward to bury the great leader in Westminster Abbey, with something of the atmosphere of Patriots' Day. Objectively, it is an attempt to idolize, not so much a man as his concepts; it is thus rather limited in appeal. Washington in boats with his ragged army, Lincoln freeing the slaves—these things could be dramatized in some fashion. But when Lenin tots up a column of figures to give some of the Eastern peoples economic freedom, what are you going to do about it in terms of pictures? Near the end of the film there is a moving section of Lenin's Russia today, with men working, tractors, forges, the dams, etc.; but on the whole it seems poorly melted newsreel material with a poetic cast. I would not have brought it up except that it has gone the way of many foreign films in its reception here, and got its most honorable citation on the grounds of its being pure cinema.

And this suggests the subject of film criticism in general, which is really the subject of this piece. The appreciation of pictures is much like all other forms; but there is the sad fact of its having thus far got so little intelligent consideration that intelligence, when it appears, tends to become the high priest guarding marvels. Everyone goes to the movies, to laugh or to delight his heart; they are a part of common experience—and very common at that, usually. Now and then one is good, but in thinking of it we do not think of art. It's just a movie; we only went for the fun. So when someone comes along and says down his nose, Art in the cinema is largely in the hands of artists in cinematographic experimentation, we think, Mm, fancy such a thing, I wonder what *that* is like. When someone, almost holding his breath, says, Well, there is surely no better *montage* (or *régisseur*) than this *montage* (or *régisseur*), we are apt to be discouraged: Oh damn, I missed it again, all I saw was a story with people and action. And when someone says of "Three Songs about Lenin," This is pure cinema, implying that you couldn't say more for it, we think, Well, well, can't miss that surely.

The pay-off is that *régisseurs* are in ordinary life directors, that *montage* is simply the day-in-day-out (in Hollywood) business of cutting: all you need, except for the higher technical reaches, is a pair of shears and a good sense of timing. As for pure cinema, we would not praise a novel (in which field by this time you must, to be intelligent, be intelligible, or perish) by saying merely that it was pure *roman*. I do not wish to pull rabbits out of the

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Given the proper facilities and scientific advice, anyone can, me for instance. Out of my window I can see a rather mean-looking tenement. Doors, windows, a sidewalk. Just above it, rising over it, is a tall very recent building, elevator apts. electrolux, 1 2 3 4 5 rooms, etc., but wait, we'll not open there. We will catch the meanness of the mean street by opening on pages 18-19 of The New York Times for last week, dirty and blowing along the mean sidewalk in the morning wind. Dust, desolation. The paper blowing and on the sound track a high piccolo note—wheeeeeeee—and the street empty, deserted, it is morning. Now (take the shots separately; cut and paste them together afterwards): the sky (gray), the house (sleeping), the paper, the sky, the house, the paper (whee). Follow the paper down to, suddenly, the wheel of a milk truck (Ha! truck—life, the city stirs; throw in a tympani under the piccolo for the city stirring) which goes down to the mean house, stops, the driver gets out: follow him with one bottle of Grade B up three flights of mean stairs to a mean door where—stop.

Down in the street the driver comes out, yawns. Up the house front slowly to a top-floor window where a man, touseled, yawns. As the truck drives off its wheels turn, gain speed, and suddenly there are other wheels (the city awakes): trucks pounding down the Concourse, the subway, the "El," streetcars and the trucks pounding, the "Els," the subways and now (on the sound track, the piccolo goes a fifth higher) you cut in the big dynamo wheels, all the wheels, all the power houses, wheels and wheels. Rah, *montage*. Then from the dynamo out (space, motion, speed) to—what do you think? An electric grill in the big stinking apartment house, with a colored servant in white, frying bacon and looking at the dumbwaiter. Title: WHERE ALL IS THAT MILKMAN NOHOW. Now down to the milkman, taking in a bottle of heavy cream (flash: SERVANTS' ENTRANCE) to the dumbwaiter; now back to the poor house, and out over the city and up over the high proud bulge of the apartment house to the high gray clouds, over the city, over the rich and poor getting up, getting their separate service from the milkman. And on into a great dither of wheels, clouds, gaping windows, yawns, men walking—into plush elevators, on the hard mean sidewalk, faster, faster, everybody getting into motion, the same city, the same sky, the two remote worlds rich and poor. For special effect, let us say, a kid coming out of the door of the mean house, with pennies for a loaf of whole-wheat, and running past the feet and in front of the wheels, and tripping on the broken cement, falling, smack. Close-up of the head showing a splash of blood spreading on the mean stones, and flash to the apartment house, up, up, to a window, in through the window to the cream being poured into the coffee, being drunk in bed, in silk pyjamas, spilling, a splash of coffee spreading on the silk pyjamas.

Any good? I'm afraid not. But it is pure cinema. Pure cinema can be anything: the important thing always is whether it is done well, whether you can pile one thing on another in a clear beautiful moving line. The wonderful and humbling thing about the movies in general is the skill and sure judgment behind this mechanical transfer of images to strips of celluloid, of a certain number of feet of celluloid into a moving series of images that that will have a certain effect on those who watch. It doesn't matter whether the result is a story of a Significant Experiment: what we have got to single out is the difference between a picture that catches you up in its own movement, and a picture that stammers, stands doubtfully, hammers at a few obvious meanings, and leaves you with a feeling of all the mechanism used to capture emotion, without the emotion. "Three Songs about Lenin" may have been attacked with a new attack, may be an awesome experiment. My point is that it is not a good picture, and my quarrel with movie criticism is simply that if it was, those who thought so have not done one thing to show why, in so many simple honest words. OTIS FERGUSON.

CORRESPONDENCE

Kallen *v.* Mumford

SIR: A good friend has sent me a copy of The New Republic of October 3, with Mr. Lewis Mumford's review of my book, "A Free Society." I am indebted to him for considerable entertainment.

The review is an exhibition of Mr. Mumford's state of mind. It reveals no relevancy to the argument of "A Free Society."

I argue that inasmuch as we are all consumers by nature and producers only by necessity, a free society would be based on the primacy of consumers' interests; it would consist of two nation-wide confederations, of which each citizen would be a member—a consumers' federation, holding title to the land, the natural resources, and the machinery which converts these into consumable goods; and a producers' confederation of trades and professions charged with responsibilities for the methods, standards and conditions of production; the two organizations together would constitute the government of the land.

About this, Mr. Mumford says not a word. Instead he scolds me first for ignoring what capitalism has done to "political inventiveness," whatever that may mean, and for ignoring the bad quality of goods, distribution, etc.; and again he scolds me—this time quite passionately—for suggesting that the N.R.A. opens a door to a Free Society "provided that individuals who are charged with its direction rise heroically to the occasion and work for the common weal," and for ignoring that such people are biased capitalists. He quotes my dedication and suppresses the critical lines which establish whether it is irony or not.

He consistently misrepresents my views. If the editor would permit me, I should like to set in parallel columns what I do say, and what Mr. Mumford says I say or fail to say. But I know that there cannot be such generosity with space, and I can only refer the reader for what I do say about the bearing of capitalism on political institutions to pages 27, 31, 55, 97, etc.; and about the nature of the N.R.A. and its administrators to Chapters VII, VIII and IX, especially pages 119 and 122.

I ask myself why Mr. Mumford should have come to such a state of mind, and the only answer that I can see is that, in common with many other permanent adolescents of this generation, he hates pragmatism and loves, perhaps, communism. I have noticed that it is a rule among present-day American Communists, as it was among the Fathers of the early Church, to denounce what is considered heretical, regardless of its content. Thus it may be that Mr. Mumford's communism has disposed him toward ecclesiastical methods. Join this to a long standing hatred of pragmatism, and it becomes intelligible why, regarding ideas and events which he believes to be pragmatic or anti-communistic, he does not even attempt to open his eyes before he opens his mouth.

John Dewey established long ago in The New Republic that Mr. Mumford is perfectly ignorant of pragmatism, and Mr. Mumford appears since then only to have enhanced this perfection. Now pragmatism is little more than an extension of the method of the sciences to all the fields of life. It holds that social programs, like scientific theories, are in themselves speculative

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hypotheses, not established facts; that only a man's will to believe in one rather than another and to take the consequences of his faith by putting it to the test, can turn it from a faith into a fact; that no new hypothesis can be ruled out *a priori;* that each has a claim on the opportunity to make good. From the point of view of the pragmatist, communism is initially no less valid and no more than any other ism. It is by its practical consequences for human life, not by its logic, that it will survive or perish. Thus it is possible for some pragmatists to stake their faith on communism; I stake mine on a consumers' economy. We can agree on pragmatism and disagree on communism and coöperation, just as any two scientists can agree on scientific method and disagree on the theories it tests. To tender-minded dogmatists like Mr. Mumford this may be an abomination, but it is nevertheless the way of life and the condition of progress.

New York City. H. M. KALLEN.

SIR: Anyone who will read "A Free Society" and then look at my review will see that what Dr. Kallen calls my misrepresentation is really his own confusion. His notion that I object to his proposals because they are "heretical" is fantastic. I object to them because his means are inconsistent with his ends; for his means derive from capitalism, the extension of the N.R.A., while his ends derive from communism. My own relation to Marxian communism is as heretical as Dr. Kallen's, and in several respects I am closer to him than I am to the Seventh Day Adventists and Complete Immersionists among the Marxians. But I do not hold that one can pluck the fruits of communism off the capitalist tree, with the help of a few moral heroes in Washington.

The transformation implied by Dr. Kallen's conception of a consumers' federation is too profound to be described in terms of a scientific hypothesis: that is a misleading metaphor, which does not apply to anything but minor political changes, like the experiment with prohibition, within the established frame. *The change he demands requires a change in the basic postulates of society:* as great as that which took place in astronomy in the change from the Ptolemaic to the Copernican system. Such an alteration involves the establishment of a new scale of values, the generation of fresh moral and social forces, the building up of new goals and objectives that will supplant those capitalism built up during the last five centuries: nothing less. That is not a job for people who fail to distinguish between a major postulate and a minor hypothesis, or who look to an institution designed to save capitalism as a possible step toward building up a new coöperative order on the basis of the common ownership of the means of production.

Long Island City, N. Y. LEWIS MUMFORD.

From an Admirer of Saroyan

SIR: The year 1934 will be memorable in American letters for the appearance on the native scene of three young men: singer Engle of the Midwest; farmer Stuart of the Southeast; trapeze performer Saroyan of the Far West.

And don't let anybody fool you about these boys. They're O.K. They're naturals. Their appearance in the same year is simply another proof of inevitable American magnificence, and the common sources of their productions is an indication of new health in American life. They come out of contemporary chaos, laughing, but not trivial, aware of the weaknesses of this life, but aware also of its glories, and native literature is going to be a long time getting over the influence of their three books: "American Song"; "Man with a Bull-Tongue Plow"; "The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze."

Each book has been dexterously attacked by critics who are supposed to be sound, and each book, somewhat amusingly, has been praised by readers and by quite a few important writers. Even more amusingly, each book, supposedly of the sort that never sells, has swiftly become a best-seller. So what? So maybe American criticism is either too far ahead of American writing, or American writing is too far ahead of American criticism. I take heads.

San Francisco, Calif. WILLIAM SAROYAN.

An Appeal for Unemployment Insurance

SIR: There is no single issue so intimately connected with the welfare of the people of this country as unemployment insurance. If the subhealth standards of our haphazard relief system are to be eliminated and if a restored purchasing power is to decrease the present unemployment, the next session of Congress must enact adequate unemployment-insurance legislation.

The present situation is very favorable for influencing Congress. A broad movement has already developed for real unemployment insurance which will immediately apply to the millions of workers now unemployed. Approximately ten million people, through their trade unions, city councils and fraternal, church and other organizations, have endorsed the Workers' Unemployment and Social Insurance Bill.

In order to increase and consolidate this support for such unemployment insurance, a National Congress for Unemployment and Social Insurance will be held in Washington on January 5 to 7. The call to the Congress is addressed to representatives of all national and local organizations and interested individuals. The Congress will jointly formulate a comprehensive plan for all forms of social insurance and exert pressure upon the Seventy-fourth Congress of the United States to act without delay upon such a program as is formulated.

Considerable funds are needed for this work. It is necessary to reach tens of thousands of organizations (trade unions, professional, church, unemployed, etc.) with a copy of the call to the Congress. Promotional literature must be provided; the cost of the Congress itself—the rental of halls and the transportation of unemployed delegates—must be covered.

Those interested in advancing the movement for the enactment of a system of genuine social and unemployment insurance are urged both to communicate with the sponsoring committee and to send a contribution to help defray the necessary expenses. Contributions may be addressed to T. Arnold Hill, Room 624, 799 Broadway, New York City.

T. ARNOLD HILL, Treasurer,
National Sponsoring Committee for
New York City. Unemployment and Social Insurance.

For the Scottsboro Defense

SIR: The granting of a stay of execution to Patterson and Norris, the two Scottsboro boys who were to be electrocuted December 7, and the filing of application for writ of certiorari in the case of Norris with the United States Supreme Court, once again bring the fight for the Scottsboro boys into this court.

The International Labor Defense, represented by Walter H. Pollak and Osmond K. Fraenkel in its appeal to the Supreme Court, has complete charge of the case.

All contributions toward covering the tremendously expensive cost of the appeal should be sent at once to the International Labor Defense Scottsboro-Herndon Fund, 80 East Eleventh Street, Room 610, New York City.

LOUIS COLMAN,
New York City. International Labor Defense.

Extracts from Letters

THE American Association for Social Security, New York City, writes that a luncheon will be given under the auspices of the Association at the Astor Hotel on December 15 at 12:35 P. M. Senator Hugo L. Black of Alabama; Mr. George Meany, president of the New York State Federation of Labor, and New York State Senator William T. Byrne will be the speakers.

Direction, a new quarterly published in Peoria, Illinois, has made its first appearance. According to Kerker Quinn, an editor, its function is "to cover modern creative writing, avoiding the blatant, the trivial and the smug. In the first issue, stories by Kay Boyle, Paul Horgan and Vardis Fisher are flanked by one from the novice pen of Hilda Perini. William Carlos Williams, Richard Aldington, Branch Cabell and Ezra Pound contribute prose as individual as one might expect." Subscriptions and contributions should be addressed to Direction, [illegible]

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Tale of Critics

The American Theatre as Seen by Its Critics, 1752-1934, edited by Montrose J. Moses and John Mason Brown. New York: W. W. Norton and Company. 391 pages. $3.75.

WHEN WE plan a collection that will convey more or less the story of our theatre in criticism there are several courses open.

We might, for instance, have in mind the idea of the theatre as conceived or interpreted by dramatic critics. The book would then comprise such essays as, along with reviewing a play, deal also with theories of acting or of drama, décor or, indeed, with the whole theatre art. This would be one way. It would select criticism that is notable for its constructive and suggestive values, a genuine contribution to the life of the theatre and its artists, an authentic dilation of the theatre's scope in theory and practice. By the same token, this method would be rough on many of the critics. The slightest reading of "The American Theatre as Seen by Its Critics" will show, if we had not known the fact already, that some of them have no idea in general of what the art is that they respond to in particular, and no very clear notion of what they desire it to be. Whitman, for example, is largely pleading vaguely for some sort of realism, or naturalism, that underlies his own artistic impulses, and is asking the stage to provide him in certain respects with satisfactions that he might or might not recognize when they occurred. The theatre's resentment of its critics often turns on just that point.

For a collection made on such a basis, however, the amount of creative editing or point of view necessary would have been thwarted by the lack of material to edit. We have not had enough distinguished criticism to make a wide collection. The saner course has been followed. The critics have been allowed to speak for themselves. In some cases, it seems to me, I have read work by the critic that is much better than the examples of his work afforded in this collection. But in the main they jumble along with their enthusiasms, acidities, theories and happy reminiscences with a certain irregularity and abandonment that parallel those of the theatre itself. In a sense there is something very right and profound about this. It ends by relegating the critic to a place in which he is an element of the theatre art; he belongs among the mediums by which this complex art expresses itself. Of these mediums, beside the drama, acting, décor, et cetera, we have the audience as a necessary part of the moment. The critic, if you like, may be taken as a sort of intellectual foetus in this throbbing body of response, or as a roaring lion in this menagerie of artistic principles. In recording himself thus he records a sort of theatrical autobiography, not of himself but of the thing to which he contributes an element.

The distinction, therefore, is justly made in the Introduction between what is history of the theatre written by some historian and what is theatrical criticism written by a critic. The volume that results is a different record of the theatre from any founded on historical method. This volume differs from Mr. James Agate's "The English Dramatic Critics—1660-1932," in that its chief concern what happened to have been typical of the theatre about which these critics have written. As a whole the volume is far more interesting as theatrical and popular-minded record than as the criticism of an art, as a galaxy of critics. It is more engaging than important.

The list of contents begins with a prologue written by John Singleton and spoken at Williamsburg, Virginia, by Mr. Rigby on the evening of September 5, 1752:

> To this new world, from fam'd Britannia's shore,
> Through boist'rous seas where foaming billows roar,
> The Muse, who Britons charm'd for many an age,
> Now sends her servants forth to tread the stage;
> Britain's own race, though far removed, to show
> Patterns of every virtue they should know.

This starts off for us, at the very first, the British influence, right virtues and all. As the list of contents proceeds—Royall Tyler's "The Contrast," reviewed by "Candour," "Jonathan Oldstyle Goes to the Play," by Washington Irving, Poe's review of Mrs. Mowatt's "Fashion," (1845), Whitman's review of Forrest in "The Gladiator" (1846) and then the review in The New York Herald of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," the dramatic version (1852)—we move farther from Europe, until finally we come to the reviews of "The Great Divide," The Show-Off" and "Of Thee I Sing," which may be taken, so far as we have got up to date, to be American as distinguished from foreign.

The volume covers, to some extent at least, the range of criticism from a certain highly cerebral, if icy, laying down of principles, such as Poe could do, to conveying or reimbodying the very enchantment and fulness of the moment, such as Alexander Woollcott at his best can do.

> It will be easy enough to describe its obvious shortcomings [Mr. Woollcott writes of the Camille of Lillian Gish], its emotional emptiness, the pinched little voice which reduces all her colloquies to an arid prattle. One has the illusion of watching Camille played by a small-town high-school girl. This is part of an abiding immaturity which one finds difficult to describe in such words as will distinguish it from arrested development. It is the immaturity of a pressed flower—sweet, cherishable, withered. It has a gnome-like unrelation to the processes of life and death. It has the pathos of little bronze dancing boots, come upon suddenly in an old trunk. It is the ghost of something that has passed this way—the exquisite print of a fern in an immemorial rock.

Such a passage about such a performance, so special and elusive, constitutes exact theatrical record.

Before this volume reached its final state death claimed one of its editors, and to quote the dedication of the other editor of the book to him will be only to express what many of those interested in the American theatre have long felt:

> MONTROSE J. MOSES
> A Young Spirit,
> A Devoted Enthusiast,
> A Learned Authority, a Wise Critic,
> And a Valued Friend.

STARK YOUNG.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Valuta Girl

SHE WAS a German schoolgirl bored by the War, a flapper thrilled by the revolution in Bavaria, an apprentice banker in Berlin during the Inflation, a Frenchman's mistress in the years after Locarno. She was twice married, first to a famous physician, then to the head of the biggest publishing house in the Western world. She was the central figure in the worst of all the scandals before the Reichstag fire. She regards herself as a free individual, but at all times she has acted as the creature of her age and caste. That is the virtue of R. G.'s "Prelude to the Past."[1] She is so immersed in the time spirit that, simply by writing the candid story of her life, she has mirrored the vast decay of the Weimar Republic.

R.G.—Frau Rosie Graefenberg-Ullstein, born Rosa Goldschmidt—was the daughter of the leading Jewish banker in Mannheim. The Jews in that Rhineland city were "completely assimilated, and distinguished from their Christian fellow citizens chiefly by their greater interest in things of the mind." Famous writers and musicians were guests in the Goldschmidt home. Rosie grew up in "an atmosphere of brilliance, beauty, cordiality and stimulation that I have never seen surpassed in any other society in the world."

In the last year of the War, when Rosie was nineteen, she was given her own checkbook and sent to study art in Munich. She was there when the revolution broke out. The revolutionary leaders were professors and poets "with wise gentle faces. . . . They said 'reason' and 'good will' and 'we will have no terror.'" They believed in the brotherhood of man, and for this mistake they were shot promptly when the bourgeoisie got back into power. Meanwhile the students were celebrating the revolution in their own fashion, by drinking and making love. At first Rosie enjoyed this life, then simultaneously she lost her revolutionary enthusiasm and was disgusted with the dancing in half-lit crowded rooms, the lying about on couches and pawing one another. She would never like adultery unless it was wrapped in pink silk sheets.

In 1921, after winning a Heidelberg doctorate *summa cum laude,* Rosie was apprenticed to a banker in Berlin. With the War lost and the revolution suppressed, everyone was bent on making money. The most honorable of the new people she met was Kommerzienrat Guggenheim, of whom her employer said that he "was decent up to 100,000 marks. Nobody is decent beyond that." Soon the inflation would be upon them and nobody would be decent beyond twenty American dollars.

Rosie did not dislike the inflation. "It contained all the elements of the uncertain and of the hectic, which I then felt to be congenial to me." Having finished her banking apprenticeship and having tired of married life with a fashionable physician, she went to work for one of the new kings of industry. He summoned her to his imposing private office:

> It was a few weeks after I had entered the firm. On the blotting pad with its pink sheets lay the drafts which he was going to use to purchase a large stock of goods. They represented several hundred millions. I sat facing him while he signed one after another with his heavy gold fountain pen. The masterful way he pressed down the blotting paper irritated me. He was such a poseur, was Lobkowitz!
>
> "The whole capital of the firm won't be enough to redeem those drafts," I said.
>
> "In three months, when they fall due, they won't be worth a hundredth of their present value," he said triumphantly.
>
> Lobkowitz knew his inflation, and his nerve was magnificent . . . that afternoon I became his mistress.

After divorcing her husband (who knew nothing about the affair with Lobkowitz) she went to live in Paris and fell in love with a French business man. It was her Franco-German reconciliation, her own Locarno. From the very beginning, this affair with René had a political basis. He would often shout, "*Your* Stresemann is not acting in good faith. *Your* fortifications on the east! It is clear that *you* are secretly arming."—After puzzling for a moment over his outbreak she would understand the cause of it. "Why don't you say at once that I ought not to flirt with the man at the next table?" René would laugh shamefacedly, and then a moment later, *"Mon petit chou,"* he would say, "you are adorable. And I own that the Germans do their level best to pay their reparation debts." René left her when it became evident that France and Germany were not going to be reconciled.

Back in Berlin her two best friends were a former revolutionist and a Cabinet Minister who had won his office by betraying the revolution. The first, Paul Levi, was a comrade of Rosa Luxemburg and had helped her and Karl Liebnecht to lead the Spartacists when they rose in January, 1919. "I always had the feeling," Rosie says, "that the murder of Rosa Luxemburg had broken down his revolutionary energies, though for a time he remained the leader of the Communist Party He did not leave the Party till he had been to Moscow and discovered that his political aims were incompatible with those of Lenin. All his German friends—which meant most of the intellectuals—left the Party when he did." He was now a lawyer specializing in divorce and treason cases and a collector of old china, Chinese bronzes and ceramics and Gothic Madonnas. The Cabinet Minister was Robert Weismann, who, after the first revolution in November, 1918, was head of the political police "and knew everything about everybody. The fact that, in spite of this, he took action only against Communists made him acceptable to German Social Democrats and the German bourgeoisie, and he became Secretary of State for Prussia." Paul Levi, who fought beside Rosa Luxemburg, and Robert Weismann, who helped to plan her murder, now moved in the same circles and Rosie admired them both.

I am not trying to narrate her career; I am merely suggesting a few of the episodes and characters that cast a light on the society in which she lived. It was a society wholly without standards, and by the beginning of the year 1930 she had reached the top of it. She slept between rose-colored silk sheets and went out to dinner wearing more jewels than Al Capone. She was married to one of the richest men in Germany, a publisher twice her age, and was acquiring more and more influence in the great House of Ullstein. But Dr. Franz Ullstein's four brothers, who were also his partners, hated Rosie and

[1] Prelude to the Past: The Autobiography of a Woman, by R. G. New York: William Morrow and Company. 381 pages. $3

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charged her with being a woman of abandoned morals and a spy for several foreign governments. A scandal burst forth involving so many editors and pimps and statesmen that it hastened the fall of the German Republic.

R.G. doesn't show to much advantage in her own "Prelude to the Past." She married a rich man in the hope of using his wealth and position to prolong her liaison with a government official who didn't love her. She got all the money she could out of Dr. Franz Ullstein without ever paying him for value received. The best one can say for her is that her morals were those of the crazy world in which she lived. For Rosie and her friends there was nothing to do but plunge forward, backward, up, down, nobody knew where; for it was as if all these ex-Communists, ex-heroes, ex-Jews, ex-Christians, were lacking in those tubes of the inner ear that give a sense of balance; their experiences had made them biologically unfit to survive. After reading this book of hers, you don't like Hitler any better, but you can understand why so many people regarded him as a savior. There are ages so utterly sunk beneath the level of human dignity that they make even a false and vicious messiah seem, for the moment, better than none at all.

MALCOLM COWLEY.

Now Warm, Now Chill

The Letters of Gamaliel Bradford, 1918-1931, edited by Van Wyck Brooks. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 384 pages. $4.50.

THESE letters of Gamaliel Bradford's, like the journal that Van Wyck Brooks also edited last year, give a very pleasant impression of certain sides of Bradford's nature, but, like the journal, they make it easy to see why his biographical essays, for all their delicacy and finish, never seemed to reach a more than moderate distinction. Their unmistakable virtues were certainly the product of Bradford's likable qualities as a man just as much as of his powers as a writer, if such an artificial distinction can be made for a moment. It does him infinite credit that, in the teeth of the deteriorated Puritanism that was his whole personal background, in spite of the extreme seclusion in which his wretched health forced him to live and the melancholia that was a part of his affliction, Bradford should have kept—and in fact with increasing wholeheartedness—his naturally kindly feeling for human beings.

The man's charitableness, his fundamental democratism, come out again and again in his letters. "The human heart," he writes, "seems to me much more lovable than it did when I began"; and more than once he protests against the stylish cynicism, the rayon-Nietzschean mode, of the decade or two in which he was most active as a publishing writer and most in touch with the literary profession. "I, for one," he says, "resent with all my energy the Carlylean, Nietzschean view of supermen of any kind. . . . The highest aim of biography should be to bring out *common* humanity." And apparently this was a genuine personal conviction as well as a philosophic tenet. For all his disbelief in moral estimates, he was capable of passing deadly judgments on the cheaply successful people he saw at the forefront of our civilization—on "their negative qualities, their utter lack of sensibility and shyness, their perfect indifference to the feelings and sufferings of others, their entire disregard of ridicule and abuse of themselves"—and, so far as he was capable of social intercourse at all, he seems to have preferred the undistinguished. "Even now I confess that I take no pleasure in middle-class society. . . . Humanity, to me, means the farmer and the street-car conductor and the mechanic, and I had far rather chat with these than with the banker or the clergyman."

This warmth of human feeling, glowing even through the chill of Bradford's doubts and hesitations, is certainly a great part of the charm of his psychographs; it helps one to tolerate the drip, drip, drip, like that of a leaky faucet, of his intellectual inconclusiveness. But the inconclusiveness is ever present; it persists like an exasperating monotone throughout these wavering letters, and it is a large factor in the malady that enfeebles his essays. He was victimized of course by the decay of a class culture, and at times he seems to have been on the very verge of seeing this in all its bearings. But never quite, and one of the melancholy results was that his fine catholicity itself became a largely negative thing. The man who could write to Judge Robert Grant after the Sacco-Vanzetti case as amiably as if that affair had never occurred within earshot of him (Bradford indeed never mentions it anywhere) is hardly to be honored for the highest and most positive charity, and in general Bradford's refusal to "judge" the men he wrote about in the light of all their connections was, as his letters illustrate, a shrinking from intellectual responsibility as much as it was generosity. His own kindly intentions, however, should make indulgence easy, and if the inevitable protests are kept in leash, his letters can be read with a more than respectful interest.

NEWTON ARVIN.

A Summer Visitor

Candles in the Storm, by Robert Littell. New York: Harper and Brothers. $2.50.

FOR A novelist in search of a neatly finite microcosm, a sleeping car, a hotel, a sinking ship or a summer colony comes in handy. He can show his little world as if it were really a sinking ship or an express train running mad through the night—or as just a summer colony. Mr. Littell has followed the usual middle course, and exhibits his microcosm as if it were a little of both. Everyone will recognize the neatness of his pattern, and nobody can accuse him of taking it too seriously. On the other hand, there is a thought in it for all of us. Altogether, it depressingly resembles one of those carefully contrived Broadway plays in which the intellectual content is well above the legal minimum, but which never for a minute lets you forget that it is your entertainment the author is after. This is not faint praise; it is intended to be severe criticism of a book that might have been much better.

Mr. Littell's story is about a somewhat blue-stocking summer colony in the New England hills. The summer people, who have all been going there for years, and consider themselves old inhabitants, are an artistic but respectable lot: they are intellectually snobbish, self-consciously cultivated, perhaps a little dull, except for the few normal human beings who leaven any communal lump. The excitement that sets the whole hive whirring is caused by a newcomer, a butterfly who poses as a queen bee, but who dies as butterflies must when the summer is over. Mr. Littell is a gifted writer, and there are some scenes and passages in "Candles in the Storm" in which he makes full use of his talent. He knows how to make an occasional phrase do more than its share, how to sketch a living landscape in a few words. But a novel needs more than that.

T. S. M.

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New Books on the New Deal

Beyond the New Deal, by David Lawrence. New York: Whittlesey House. 320 pages. $2.50.

It's Up to Us, by James P. Warburg. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 220 pages. $2.

Government Rules Industry, by Michael F. Gallagher. New York: Oxford University Press. 254 pages. $2.

Challenge to the New Deal, edited by Alfred M. Bingham and Selden Rodman. New York: Falcon Press. 294 pages. $2.50.

A Short History of the New Deal, by Louis M. Hacker. New York: F. S. Crofts and Company. 151 pages. $1.75.

AMONG other things the New Deal has served as a stimulus to opinion. The presses are turning out an apparently endless stream of literature offering an apparently endless variety of grounds for being either "against" or "for" the Roosevelt program. The wide range of critical premises on which discussions of the New Deal are based represents, of course, differences in taste and bias among authors. Such differences arise in connection with all questions of policy. In the present case, however, the failure of opposing arguments to meet each other, the lack of focus in discussion, appears to reflect a central defect in the New Deal itself. The New Deal has no clear objective. Therefore it offers no clear and consistent outline of legislation and administrative policy. Therefore opinions about it, which would in any case be diverse, tend to become arguments not focused in relation to each other.

In "Beyond the New Deal" Mr. Lawrence exhibits a remarkable historicity, and an equally remarkable failure to come to grips with important problems. His anticipation of the questions that may arise in the future rests upon his knowledge and observation of processes in the past. He is quite conscious of the strong habits of thought and action that influence people and so create a pattern peculiarly "American." He recognizes and describes particular forms of individual, group and national selfishness that create conflict, prevent coördination and result in mutual bafflement to all elements in this bewildering society. He demonstrates that "the state stood by, accessory to the crimes of an irresponsible individualism." He raises a large number of searching questions concerning domestic and international trends and tendencies. But the answers to all the questions he raises run, in Mr. Lawrence's own mind, in terms of "responsible government," "responsible individualism" and "enlightened nationalism." The New Deal program itself is not consistent with these terms. Mr. Lawrence believes in people rather than in systems. Speaking of the sad tendency of governments to deceive people, he says: "The cure is . . . to put the right kind of people in government to see to it that the public is not deceived." Yet the program of political reform that he offers does not assure getting the right kind of people in government. Mr. Lawrence's conception of economic relations follows a similar line. Recovery and stability in our economic life "can come only out of a regeneration of the individual." What this regeneration is to come out of is not stated. As for what is meant by "enlightened nationalism," one person's guess is as good as another's.

Mr. Warburg's little book, "It's Up to Us," does not pretend to analyze the current economic difficulties. The author says frankly: "My efforts may quite properly be classified as pamphleteering, for I am concerned with only one thing; namely, to drive home a message." The gist of Mr. Warburg's message is that this country is headed straight for some kind of "ism." He dislikes all of them, fascism, socialism and communism. His grounds are: (1) it is not possible to create a condition of life that will be permanently satisfactory; (2) there is no method of distributing wealth and income that can be perpetual; (3) all "isms" entail the sacrifice of both liberty and progress. Mr. Warburg does not recognize that these same grounds should make him equally opposed to the conditions that existed prior to the New Deal. The logic of his position is not changed in the least by the patchwork of reform proposals he offers. Although he is less explicit than Mr. Lawrence, his reform ideals amount to "responsible government" and "responsible individualism." And, like Mr. Lawrence, he does not explain how we are to achieve this happy state of responsibility. Mr. Warburg's book consists largely of reprints of articles and addresses by himself and others.

There has been some need for a book that would describe, in a thoroughgoing fashion, the administrative workings of the N.R.A. The first half of Mr. Gallagher's "Government Rules Industry" deals with just these matters. It explains how the N.R.A. is organized, how codes are made, how the labor provisions and anti-trust provisions of the Recovery Act are applied, how codes are administered and enforced. Most of these explanations are well and interestingly presented. The description of the process of code-making is the clearest account I have seen of the formalities involved—although it says little of the manipulation and coercion going on behind the scenes. Mr. Gallagher's account of the administrative difficulties raised by Article 7a is objective and fair. Following the discussion of these administrative matters, he offers an analysis of constitutional and legal questions involved in the Recovery Act that should help greatly to clarify the issues.

The most interesting critical work among these books is, in my judgment, the "Challenge to the New Deal." In it the editors of Common Sense have reprinted articles contributed to that journal by thirty-five representatives of liberal and radical opinion. Although the editors have classified and organized the articles in a logical fashion, there is nothing "systematic" about the book. Each author attacks a particular situation or point in the New Deal program. Thus Edmund Wilson tells how the milk interests wrote the milk code in Pennsylvnia; J. B. S. Hardman explains why labor must fight for advantage under the new dispensation; Professor John Dewey stresses the need for a radical third party to recognize objectives and avoid expedients. Almost all of the authors are impressed with the dramatic content of present social currents and have done full justice to it in their writing. Some of them have yielded to the temptation to write impressionistically. The book they have created is in no sense scientific. It does, however, achieve a distinguished level of journalistic writing.

Mr. Hacker's "A Short History of the New Deal" is the most objective—and the most substantial from an economic point of view—of the several books under discussion here. In the literature dealing with the current emergency, there is, so far as I know, no other book that gives so complete an account of the background, the policies and the effects of the Roosevelt program as this small volume. The history of the current economic situation is well documented, and presented with great fairness and accuracy. Mr. Hacker demonstrates that the "New Deal" is neither a revolution nor an "ism," but is simply a set of compromises with situations, both economic and political. If I were asked to recommend one book on the New Deal, this is the book I should name.

HORACE TAYLOR

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The Lively Life of Steele

Sir Richard Steele, by Willard Connely. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 462 pages. $3.75.

THIS BOOK is a labor of love, and love often drives one to great lengths. It is also a work of erudition. The author is saturated with Steele and his period, and knowledge and devotion combined make him reluctant to leave out anything. In a disarming foreword Mr. Connely says in effect that he has not tried to be either ancient or modern in his biographical approach, he has merely sought to know Steele as a human being. If one has access to all the documents, Dick Steele is not difficult to know, for there was nothing profound or subtle about him. He was the prince of good fellows and of borrowers, generous, unreliable, kindly, a witty and effervescent Irishman whose love of wine, woman and fine raiment never weakened through all the vicissitudes of his career, and whose enormous gusto for life, whose energy and resourcefulness led him into the most varied undertakings: a literary and journalistic career, playwriting, managing and promoting stock companies of fantastic nature and no profits, and finally into Parliament, whence he was twice excluded for reasons that do him no dishonor. In the course of these adventures Steele was associated as friend or foe, and sometimes successively as both, with most of the prominent men of his time. During all of them he was always in debt, always borrowing or trying to borrow, hiding from bailiffs and writing charming notes to his long suffering but not too docile wife, assuring her that drunk or sober he was all hers, and would she please send some clean linen, for it was impossible for him to come home that night.

There was something irresistible about Steele, to women always, to men frequently. His respectable high-school fame, which chillily enshrines him with Addison as editor and author of Tatler and Spectator papers and thus an influence on English prose, is far from doing justice to his immersion in the social and political life of his time, or to the engaging impudence of much of his performance. It was his habit to write against borrowing and drinking in pleasant, not too moralizing vein, while hiding from a dun and with the all too frequent bottle at his elbow. He carried on a dramatic campaign against the notorious South Sea Bubble, in which the event thoroughly justified him, while trying to float stock in his no less tenuous Fishpool company. He raised gossip to a fine art and made women interesting for the first time to the English reading public. He was further the editor of numerous periodicals, some of them purely political, on the Whig side. His political career, his marriage, friendships and multifarious enterprises, sparkle with much better comedy than he ever wrote.

Mr. Connely has an excellent sense of the appealing elements in his hero's life. The book is lively and pithy, in spite of being too cluttered with a background of endless political and financial details, and repetitious with crucial instances. There are sharp portraits and thumb-nail sketches, notably of Addison, Swift, Berkeley and Richard Savage. Steele and his wife are fully felt. It is an eminently social picture that we get. There is no attempt at literary or other critical evaluation, but there are striking and amusing episodes in plenty, the course of loves and friendships not too smooth, the irony of events, scenes of literary, theatrical and political life in the days of Queen Anne and George I, a presentation high-spirited, informed, sympathetic and humorous.

CLARA G. STILLMAN.

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Books in Brief

Benjamin Rush, Physician and Citizen, by Nathan G. Goodman. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 421 pages, illustrated. $4.

DR. BENJAMIN RUSH was much more than a signer of the American Declaration of Independence, as this first—and long overdue—full-length biography very ably shows. A patriot and republican to his fingertips, brought up on the Bible and Tom Paine, Dr. Rush probably did more than any other man of his time to lay the foundations of American medicine. A pioneer in psychiatry, in the treatment of nervous diseases and epidemic fevers; first formal professor of chemistry and author of the first chemical textbook; founder of the first free dispensary, of the College of Physicians (Philadelphia) and the first Sunday-school system; temperance advocate and abolitionist; first president of the United Company for Promoting American Manufactures: these are but a few of the activities engaged in by one of the finest products of the American revolutionary period. Dr. Goodman has told the story with a skill and understanding all the more commendable because he has had to blaze his own trail through an overgrown jungle of sources: his volume is equally a contribution to American history and to the history of American science.

H. W.

Fascist Germany Explains, edited by Celia Strachey and John Gustav Werner. New York: Covici, Friede. 135 pages. $1.25.

When Ferdinand Lassalle, the great German socialist, said that "the lie is one of the Great Powers of Europe," he meant one thing. But when Hitler says that "the German has not the slightest notion how a people must be misled if the adherence of the masses is sought," he means the exact opposite. This little book exposes the systematic lying of German fascism by means of a series of quotations from newspapers, pamphlets, books and speeches. If in physics action and reaction are equal and opposite, in Nazism affirmation and negation exactly balance one another, but one is in the promise, the other in the performance. It is this crying contradiction inherent in Nazism that is unconsciously expressed in the words of Dr. Goebbels, its propaganda minister: "We know where we began, but only God knows where we will one day end."

H. S.

Industrialized Russia, by Alcan Hirsch. New York: The Chemical Catalog Company. 309 pages. $3.

Much was expected in the way of business between the United States and the U.S.S.R. right after recognition last November. So far these hopes have not materialized. But the Soviet Union is still a good prospect. According to Dr. Hirsch, Soviet purchases abroad could easily run from $500,000,000 to $1,000,000,000 a year. He tells what foreign materials and machinery are needed, and describes Soviet Russia's resources and capacity to pay its obligations. One of the reasons for the absence of large-scale trade between the two countries Dr. Hirsch sees in "the abysmal ignorance which exists in our country about the land of the Soviets." In the present book the author aims "to inform accurately how things stand in Russia." "Industrialized Russia" largely gives the answer. It covers a wide field, touching on industry, agriculture, education, living conditions, religion, the peace policy of the Soviet government, the second Five Year Plan, finance, patents. Dr. Hirsch

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stresses the elimination of unemployment, the disappearance of racial hatreds, the establishment of social insurance, old-age pensions, universal education. "Make no mistake," he says, "Soviet Russia is a youthful, strong, virile nation, growing fast and rapidly outgrowing its growing pains." Because of the multiplicity of his subjects, the treatment he gives each is necessarily brief. Yet the presentation is so concise that the book is packed with information and never boring. It is rich both in statistical material, tables and lists not usually found in other books on Russia, and in the humorous and shrewd observations of the author.

A. A. H.

Slow Vision, by Maxwell Bodenheim. New York: The Macaulay Company. $2.

This is Mr. Bodenheim's first novel since becoming a Communist, and is a distinct departure from his other books in one important respect. Life here is not a series of bedroom scenes interspersed with Village parties; from beginning to end it is a terrific struggle to exist. Mr. Bodenheim takes his protagonists from the lower-middle class of society —a class he knows well—and reveals the futility of their hopes and ambitions, showing in emphatic terms the emaciating effects of economic frustration on human character. His story centers around a boy and girl in love with each other who, in attempting to live on their own, are tossed about by the depression. Around so ordinary a situation the author has built a vivid picture of depression days in New York and Boston. Mr. Bodenheim writes in a facile, somewhat naïve manner that doesn't always make for rounded characterizations, but in switching his radicalism from sex to social conditions he has given his writing a sense of vitality it would not otherwise have. J. M.

Contributors

H. N. Brailsford is the author of several books, including "Property or Peace," recently published by Covici, Friede, and is the London correspondent of The New Republic.

Elizabeth Brandeis served for four years as assistant secretary and secretary of the District of Columbia Minimum Wage Board and now teaches Labor Legislation at the University of Wisconsin.

Julian S. Bach is a young New Yorker who recently made an extensive automobile tour of the upper Mississippi Valley.

John Gould Fletcher, after living for many years in London and writing several books of poetry and prose, has now returned to Arkansas, his native state.

T. S. Matthews is the literary editor of Time and the author of a novel, "To the Gallows I Must Go."

Newton Arvin, associate professor of English at Smith College, is now on leave of absence completing a new book.

Horace Taylor is a member of the Economics Department of Columbia University. The second volume of his college textbook, "Contemporary Problems in the United States," will be issued shortly by Harcourt, Brace and Company.

Clara G. Stillman is the author of "Samuel Butler: A Mid-Victorian Modern." She contributes articles and book reviews to various magazines.

The initials signed to the brief reviews are those of Harold Ward, Herman Simpson, A. A. Heller and Jerre Mangione.

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